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MENTAL PORTRAITS;

OR,

STUDIES OF CHARACTER.

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BY HENRY T. TUCKERMAN,

AUTHOR OF "ARTIST LIFE," &c.

"All my life long
I have beheld with most respect the man
Who knew himself, and knew the ways before him;
And from amongst them chose considerately,
With a clear foresight—not a blindfold courage;
And, having chosen, with a stedfast mind,
Pursued his purposes."

TAYLOR. PHILIP VAN ARTENVELDE.

LONDON:
RICHARD BENTLEY, NEW BURLINGTON STREET.
1853.

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LONDON:
Printed by Schulze and Co., 13, Poland Street.

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INTRODUCTION.

It is the delight of naturalists to indicate how the same law asserts itself under widely different circumstances: they point to the leaves and stems visible in fossil remains, to the same botanical organization in the pale flower buried under Alpine snows and the radiant calyx of the Tropics—to the identity of material in the cloud and the iceberg. A similar parallel may be drawn from the history of character; its phases re-appear continually, modified by time and place, yet essentially one and the same. No class is represented by the philosophy of antiquity; no general or special development is stamped on any age, and no individual man has become memorable—but have their existent prototypes and representatives. Human nature has always been the same. The plays, the biographies, and in later times,

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the novels and journals of every civilized nation illustrate this more impressively even than history, which is too general to bring out, except occasionally, the refinement of this law. Character is as truly bequeathed as estates. Every favourite ideal personage is so thorough a fidelity to the reality as it always exists; Shakspeare's greatness consists in the fact that he has contributed more to the common stock than any other author. The more we see of the world, the more it becomes "a gallery of pictures;" and it is an interesting study to compare features, trace lineages, and realize how a certain form of character is affected by circumstances as it is thus inevitably reproduced. Another desirable result of this study of character is, that from individual types we learn to recognize species, and gradually discriminate the nice shades which mark each separate form of the same genus. Observation becomes thus habitually quick and accurate, and we never want subjects of entertainment or knowledge while mingling with our fellow-creatures.

In the following Biographical Essays, written at considerable intervals of time, the attempt is made to sketch a varied group of characters, and bring into strong relief and contrast the different vocations and original

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endowments of men as diverse in their circumstances as their genius. The nationality of the author is obvious, but in every instance he has attempted to follow the maxim of the great German critic, and judge each character by its own law. The success of a similar attempt,* when republished in this country, has encouraged him to offer a new series of Mental Portraits to the English public.

* Thoughts on the Poets.

LONDON, JULY, 1853.

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MENTAL PORTRAITS.

THE MAN OF LETTERS:

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

THE character of Southey, as revealed in his biography, is essentially that of a man of letters. Perhaps the annals of English literature furnish no more complete example of the kind, in the most absolute sense of the term. His taste for books was of the most general description; he sought every species of knowledge; and appears to have been equally contented to write history, reviews, poems, and letters. Indeed, for more than twenty years, his life at Keswick was systematically divided between these four departments of writing.

No man having any pretension to genius ever succeeded in reducing literature to so methodical and sustained a process. It went on with the punctuality

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and productiveness of a cotton mill or a nail factory; exactly so much rhyming, collating, and proof reading, and so much of chronicle and correspondence in the twenty-four hours. We see Robert Southey, as he paints himself, seated at his desk, in an old black coat, long worsted pantaloons and gaiters in one, and a green shade; and we feel the truth of his own declaration that this is his history. Occasionally, he goes down to the river side, behind the house, and throws stones until his arms ache, plays with the cat, or takes a mountain walk with the children. The event of his life is the publication of a book; his most delightful hour that in which he sees the handsomely printed title-page that announces his long-meditated work ready, at last, to be ushered in elegant attire before the public; his most pleasing excitement to read congratulatory letters from admiring friends, or an appreciative critique in a fresh number of the 'Quarterly.'

Minor pastimes he finds in devising literary castles in the air, projecting epics on suggestive and unused themes, giving, here and there, a finishing touch to sentence or couplet: possessing himself of a serviceable but rare tome, transcribing a preface with all the conscious dignity of authorship, or a dedication with the complacent zeal of a gifted friend, from the triple, yet harmonious and systematic life of the country, the study, and the nursery, we see him, at long intervals, depart for a visit to London to confabulate with

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literary lions, greet old college friends, make new bargains with publishers, and become a temporary diner-out; or he breaks away from domestic and literary employment in his retreat among the hills, for a rapid continental tour, during which not an incident, a natural fact, an historical reminiscence, a political conjecture, or a wayside phenomenon, is allowed to escape him. Though wearied to the last degree at nightfall, he notes his experience with care, as material for future use; and hurries back with presents for the children and a voluminous diary, to resume his pencraft; until the advent of summer visitors obliges him to exchange awhile the toils of authorship for the duties of hospitality.

To these regularly succeeding occupations, may be added the privileges of distinction, the acquisition of new and interesting friends, of testimonies of respect from institutions and private admirers; and inevitable trials such as occasional assaults from the critics, or a birth or bereavement in the household. Sequestered and harmless we cannot but admit such a life to be, and, when chosen from native inclination, as desirable for the individual as can be imagined, in a world where the vicissitude and care of active life are so apt to interfere with comfort and peace. At the age of thirty-two, when thus settled at Keswick, Southey gratefully estimated its worth in this point of view:—"this is my life, which, if it be not a very merry one, is yet as happy as heart could wish."

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Southey left a somewhat minute and very graphic sketch of his childhood, parts of which are written in his happiest vein. Some of the anecdotes are significant, but more as illustrations of character than genius. He was bookish, moral, domestic, inquiring, and observant; but seems not to have exhibited any of that delight in the sense of wonder that kept the boy Schiller rocking in a tree to watch the lightning, or the generous ardour that made Byron a schoolboy champion, or the oppressive sensibility that weighed down the spirit of young life in Alfieri's breast. His autobiography, not less than his literary career, evinces the clever man of letters rather than the surpassing man of genius. It is characteristic of this that, between the ages of eight and twelve, he expressed the conviction that "it was the easiest thing in the world to write a play." Such is the natural language of talent; that of genius would be, "it is the greatest thing in the world."

The most effective portrait in that part of his memoirs written by himself, is that of his Aunt Tyler. It is evidently drawn from the life, and would answer for a character in the very best class of modern novels. As a revelation of himself, the most excellent traits are the disposition, spirit, and state of feeling displayed. Southey obviously possessed steady affections, self-respect, and a natural sense of duty. The embryo reformer is indicated by his essay against flogging in school; and no better proof of his reliability can be

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imagined than the fact that several of his earliest friendships continued unabated throughout life. His sketches of teachers, classmates, and the scenes of boyhood are pleasing, natural, and authentic.

Like most literary men, Southey in youth took an interest in science, dabbled in botany and entomology; but soon abandoned insects and flowers, except for purposes of metaphor. His education, too, like that of the majority of professed authors, was irregular, versatile, and unexact, vibrating between the study of text-books in a formal, and the perusal of chosen ones in a relishing manner. His love of the quaint in expression, his taste for natural history, church lore, ballads, historic incident, and curious philosophy, are richly exemplified in the specimens of the 'Commonplace Book,' recently published, and especially in that fragmentary, but most suggestive work, "The Doctor;" and these but carry out the aims and tastes foreshadowed in his youthful studies.

Marked out by natural tastes for a life of books, we recognise the instinct in the delight he experienced when first possessed of a set of Newberry's juvenile publications, the zest with which he wrote school themes, invented little dramas, and fraternized with a village editor, not less than in its mature development, when taking the shape of beautiful quartos with the imprimatur of Murray or Longmans. The sight of a fair finished page of his first elaborate metrical composition, "Joan of Arc," he acknowledges infected him with the true author mania,

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and henceforth he was only happy over pencraft or typography.

In these memoirs, we find new evidence of the laws of mind and health, and the fatal consequences of their infringement. To Southey's kind activity we are indebted for a knowledge of the most affecting instance in English literature of early genius prematurely lost, that of Kirke White; and two other cases of youthful aspiration for literary honour blighted by death, were confided to his benevolent sympathy; but the great intellectual promise, rapid development, and untimely loss of his son, is one of the most pathetic episodes of his life. His correspondence at the period explains the apparent incongruity between occasional evidences of strong feeling and an habitual calmness of tone. His nature was so balanced as to admit, as a general rule, of perfect self-control. He repeatedly asserts that the coldness attributed to him is not real. In this great bereavement, he seems to have perfectly exercised the power of living in his mind, and finding a refuge from moral suffering in mental activity. But one of the most impressive physiological, as well as intellectual lessons to be drawn from Southey's life, is in his own personal experience.

We have a striking example of the need of a legitimate hygiene for the assiduous writer, and the fatal consequence of its neglect. To his scholar's temperament and habits may be, in a measure, ascribed Southey's conservatism; and it is equally obvious

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how the same causes gradually modified his physical constitution, and, through this, his character of mind. We believe it is now admitted that, where the temperament is not indicated with great predominance, it may be almost entirely changed by diversity of circumstances and habits. The influence of the brain and nervous system is so pervading that, where the vocation constantly stimulates them and leaves the muscles and circulation, in a great degree, inactive, remarkable modifications occur in the animal economy; and so intimately are its functions associated with mental and moral phenomena, that it is quite unphilosophical to attempt to estimate or even analyze character without taking its agency into view. The sedentary life and cerebral activity of Southey seem to have very soon subdued his feelings. We perceive, in the tone of his letters, a slow but certain diminution of animal spirits; and, now and then, a prophetic consciousness of the frail tenure upon which he held, not his intelligent spirit, but his mental machinery—the incessant action of which is adequate to explain its melancholy and premature decay. The time will come when his case will be recorded as illustrative of the laws of body and mind in their mutual relations—a subject which Combe, Madden, and other popular writers have shown to be fraught with teachings of the wisest charity for what are called "the infirmities of genius."

How many pathetic chapters are yet to be written on this prolific theme, before the world is sufficiently

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enlightened to know how to treat her gifted children! We need not go to Tasso's cell to awaken our sympathies in this regard; from the fierce insanity of Swift and Collins to the morbid irritability or gloom of Johnson, Pope, and Byron, and the imbecile age of Moore and Southey, the history of English authorship is replete with solemn warnings to use even the noblest endowments of humanity with meek and severe circumspection. God is not less worshipped by select intelligences, through fidelity to the natural laws, than by celebrating his glory in the triumphs of art.

In a letter to Sharon Turner, in 1817, Southey remarks, "My spirits rather than my disposition have undergone a great change. They used to be exuberant beyond those of every other person; my heart seemed to possess a perpetual fountain of hilarity; no circumstances of study, or atmosphere, or solitude affected it; and the ordinary vexations and cares of life, even when they showered upon me, fell off like hail from a pent-house. *That spring is dried up.* I cannot now preserve an appearance of it at all without an effort, and no prospect in this world delights me except that of the next." Although he often attributed this change to special causes, and particularly to the bereavement which bore so heavily on his heart, he was, at the same time, soon aware that the recuperative energies of his nature were essentially impaired. "It is," he writes to another friend, "between ourselves, a matter of surprise that this bodily machine of

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mine should have continued its operations with so few derangements, knowing, as I do, its excessive susceptibility to many deranging causes." These shadows deepened as time passed on, and found him intent upon mental labour, when nature imperatively demanded freedom, variety, the comedy of life, and the atmosphere of a serene, cheerful, and unhackneyed existence.

There was nothing, however, in the native hue of Southey's mind that betokened any tendency to disease. On the contrary, his tone of feeling was singularly moderate, his estimate of life rather philosophic than visionary, and, for a poet, he scarcely has been equalled for practical wisdom and methodical self-government. Instead of wishing newly-married people happiness, which he considered superfluous, he wished them patience; in travelling, he was remarkable for making the best of everything; he cherished a tranquil religious faith; he systematized his life, and, instead of lamenting the dreams of youth as the only source of real enjoyment in life, he says, "Our happiness, as we grow older, is more in quantity and higher in degree as well as kind."

Another wholesome quality he largely possessed was candour. He bore with exemplary patience, as a general rule, the malevolence of criticism, suffered with few murmurs the indignity of Gifford's mutilations of his reviews, and seemed to exhibit acrimony only when assailed by a radical, or when he alluded to Bonaparte, whose most appropriate situation, through

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his whole career, he declared to have been when sleeping beside a fire made of human bone in the desert. He had the magnanimity at once to confess the genuine success of the American navy, at a time when it was common in England to doubt even the testimony of facts on the subject. "It is in vain," he writes, "to treat the matter lightly, or seek to conceal from ourselves the extent of the evil. Our naval superiority is destroyed." Of the American literature, at an earlier period, he declared, with more truth than now could be warranted, that "the Americans, since the Revolution, had not produced a single poet, who has been heard of on this side of the Atlantic." Subsequently, he was, however, the first to do justice to the poetical merits of Maria del Occidente, and numbered several congenial literary friends among her countrymen. A more versatile course might have contributed greatly to Southey's sustained vigour of mind. His early life was, indeed, sufficiently marked by vicissitude; he was successively a law-student, lecturer, private secretary, traveller, and author, and thought of becoming a librarian and a consul; but the result was a firm reversion to his primary tastes for rural life and books.

It is curious, as a psychological study, to trace the lapse of youth into manhood and senility, as indicated in the writings of men of talent, and observe how differently time and experience affect them, according to the elements of their characters. Some have their individuality of purpose and feeling gradually overlaid by the influences of their age and position, and in

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others it only asserts itself with more vehemence. There is every degree of independence and mobility, from the isolated hardihood of a Dante to the fertile aptitude of a Brougham. It was the normal condition of Southey to be conservative; taste and habit, affection and temperament, combined to reconcile him to things as they are, or, at least, to wean him from the restless life of a reformer. An intellectual friend of mine, noted for his love of ease, and whose creed was far more visionary than practical, surprised a circle, on one occasion, with his earnest advocacy of some political measure, and sighed heavily, as he added, "Vigilance is the eternal price of liberty." "But why," asked a companion, "do *you* put on the watchman's cap?" The inquiry was apposite; he had no vocation to fight in the vanguard of opinion. And this seems to us a more charitable way of accounting for Southey's change of views than to join his opponents in ascribing it to unalloyed selfishness.

To the secluded *littérateur*, watching over his gifted invalid boy amid romantic lakes and mountains, the calm and nature-loving Wordsworth was a more desirable companion than Godwin, to whom, at a previous era, he acknowledged himself under essential intellectual obligations. His wife, the gentle and devoted Edith, might have objected to such an inmate as Mary Wolstonecraft, whom her husband preferred to all the literary lions during his early visits to London; and it was far more agreeable to "counteract sedition" in his quiet studio at Keswick, than to roughly expe-

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rience *Pantisocracy* in America; while a man of sterner mould might be pardoned for preferring a pic-nic glorification over the battle of Waterloo, on the top of Skiddaw, to a lonely struggle for human rights against the overwhelming tide of popular scorn, which drove the more adventurous and poetic Shelley into exile. All Southey's compassion, however, so oracularly expressed for that sensitive and heroic spirit, derogates not a particle from the superior nobility of soul for which generous thinkers cherish his memory. We can, however, easily follow the natural gradations by which the boy Southey, whose ideal was the Earl of Warwick, and the youth Southey, intent upon human progress and social reformation, became the man Southey, a good citizen, industrious author, exemplary husband and father, and most loyal subject. Indeed, the conservative mood begins to appear even before any avowed change in his opinions. Soon after his return from the first visit to Lisbon, while hesitating what profession to adopt, and while his friends were discouraged at the apparent speculative recklessness and desultory life he indulged, we find him writing to Grosvenor, one of his most intimate friends, "I am conversing with you now in that easy, *calm, good-humoured state of mind* which is, perhaps, the *summum bonum;* the less we think of the world the better. My feelings were once like an ungovernable horse; now I have tamed Bucephalus; he retains his spirit and his strength, but *they are made useful*, and he shall not break my neck."

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This early visit to Lisbon, when his mind was in its freshest activity, attracted him to the literature of Spain and Portugal; and the local associations which gave them so vivid a charm to his taste, imparted kindred life to his subsequent critiques and historical sketches devoted to these scenes and people. They furnish another striking instance of the felicitous manner in which the experience of foreign travel and the results of study coalesce in literary productions.

Authorship, indeed, was so exclusively the vocation of Southey, that his life may be said to have been identified with it; yet pursued, as we have seen, in a spirit often mechanical, we are not surprised that, while he felt himself adapted to the pursuit, he was sometimes conscious of that mediocrity which is the inevitable fruit of a wilful tension of the mind. Thus, while to one friend he writes, "One happy choice I made when I betook myself to literature as my business in life;" to another, in 1815, he declares, "I have the disheartening conviction that my best is done, and that to add to the bulk of my works will not be to add to their estimation." Yet Southey, like all genuine authors, cherished his dream of glory, and probably anticipated enduring renown from his poetry. The mechanical spirit of his literary toil, however, was carried into verse. He set about designing a poem as he did a history or a volume of memoirs, and proceeded to fill up the outline with the same complacent alacrity. Many of these works exhibit great ingenuity of construction, both as regards form and language. They

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are striking examples of the inventive faculty, and show an extraordinary command of language; in this latter regard, some of his verses are the most curious in our literature;—the "Fall of Lodore" is an instance. But it is obvious that, unless fused by the glow of sentiment, however aptly constructed, elaborate versified tales can scarcely be ranked among the standard poems of any language. The best passages of his long poems are highly imaginative, but the style is diffuse, the interest complicated, and there is a want of human interest that prevents any strong enlistment of the sympathies. They have not the picturesque and living attraction of Scott, nor yet the natural tenderness of Burns; but are melo-dramatic, and make us wonder at the author's fertility of invention, rather than become attached to its fruits.

One of the most striking instances of want of discrimination in the critical tone of the day, was the habit of designating Coleridge, Wordsworth, and Southey under the same general term. The only common ground for calling them the Lake School was the fact that they each resided among the lakes of Cumberland at one and the same time. The diffuse, reflective, philosophic muse of Wordsworth is as essentially different from the mystic and often profoundly tender sentiment of Coleridge, as both are from the elaborate chronicles and rhetorical artifice of Southey. His "Pilgrimage to Waterloo" is an apt and clever journal in verse, occasionally, from its personal style and simplicity, quite attractive; his laureate odes have

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a respectable sound, and frequently a commendable sense, but rarely any bardic fire or exquisite grace. In a word, although there is much to admire in Southey's poetry as the work of a creative fancy and the result of research and facility, as well as invention in the use of language, we seldom find, in perusing his works, any of those "Elysian corners of intuition," where Leigh Hunt speaks of comparing notes with the reader. The amplitude, variety, and tact of constructive talent, and not the glow and mystery of genius, win us to his page. It informs, entertains, and seldom offends; but rarely melts, kindles, or nerves the spirit.

His most obstinate admirers cannot but admit that, as poems, "Joan of Arc," "Madoc," and "Roderic" have many tedious passages. They are fluent, authentic chronicles recorded in a strain that so often lapses from the spirit and dignity of the muse as to read like mere prose. Here and there, a graphic descriptive sketch or felicitous epithet redeems the narrative: but no one can wonder that, in an age when Byron individualized human passion in the most kindling rhyme, when Crabbe described so truthfully humble life, and Shelley touched the ideal spirit with his aërial phantasy, a species of poetry comparatively so distant from the associations of the heart should fail to achieve popularity. Indeed, Southey recognized the fact, and seemed not unwilling to share the favour of a limited but select circle with Landor and others, who, instead of universal suffrage, gain the special admiration of

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the few. No author, however, cherished a greater faith in literature as a means of reputation. "Literary fame," he says, "is the only fame of which a wise man ought to be ambitious, because it is the only lasting and living fame. Bonaparte will be forgotten before his time in purgatory is half over, or but just remembered like Nimrod or other cut-throats of antiquity, who serve us for the commonplaces of declamation. Put out your mind in a great poem, and you will exercise authority over the feelings and opinions of mankind as long as the language lasts."

The two poems upon which Southey evidently most genially laboured are "Thalaba" and "The Curse of Kehama." They bear the most distinct traces of his idiosyncrasies as evinced in boyhood, when a translation of the "Jerusalem Delivered" seems to have first directly appealed to his poetic instinct. The scenes of enchantment particularly fascinated him! then came "Ariosto" and "Spenser." The narrative form, and the imaginative and romantic character of these works harmonized with Southey's mind, and they continued his poetic vein after the taste of the age had become wedded to the natural, the human, and the direct in poetry. His tone and imagery were somewhat modified by Bowles and Coleridge; but he remained essentially in the class of romantic and narrative bards, in whose productions, general effects, vague dramatic and supernatural charms, and heroic chronicles form the pervading traits. Another characteristic of the modern

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poetry he lacked was concentration. One concise vivid, and inspired lyric outlives the most laboured epic. Sterling's brief tribute to "Joan of Arc" brings her nearer to us than Southey's quarto.

As works of art, the varied rhyme and rhythm, and prolific fancy, won for Southey's long poems a certain degree of attention and respect; but he is remembered more for certain fine passages than for entire compositions. In these, his claim to the title of poet, in the best sense of the word, asserts itself; and, but for these, he would rank only as a clever improvisatore. Learning, indeed, overlays inspiration in his long poems. He faithfully explored Welsh annals for the materials of "Madoc," Hindoo mythology and Asiatic scenery for the "Curse of Kehama," and Gothic history for "Roderic." All narrative poems are somewhat indebted to external materials; but these must be fused, as we have before hinted, into a consistent and vital whole by the glow of some personal sentiment, ere they will find universal response. Thus, the intense consciousness of Byron, the chivalric zeal of Campbell, and the amorous fancy of Moore, give a life and significance to their stories in verse that invest them with a sympathetic atmosphere and unity of feeling. There is little of this in Southey's narratives; they are more ingenious than glowing, more imaginative than natural; and they entertain more than they inspire. He seems destitute of that sacred reserve

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which renders manners so efficient, deepens love's channel, and hallows truth to consciousness; that instinctive suggestiveness, which is a great secret of Dante's power, giving sublime imitations of Tennyson's exquisite sentiment, vaguely hinting the inexpressible; and of Wordsworth's solemn mysticism, as in the "Ode on the Prospect of Immortality." To such lofty and profound elements, the poetry of Southey has no claims: but, in descriptive aptitude, and especially in rhetorical effect, he is sometimes remarkable. Occasionally, in these qualities, in their simplicity, he reminds us of the old dramatists; thus, in Madoc—

> "The masters of the song,
> In azure robes were robed—that one bright hue,
> To emblem unity, and peace, and truth,
> Like Heaven, which o'er a world of wickedness
> Spreads its eternal canopy serene."

And again, in the same poem—

> "'Tis pleasant, by the cheerful hearth, to hear
> Of tempests and the dangers of the deep,
> And pause at times and feel that we are safe,
> Then listen to the perilous tale again,
> *And with an eager and suspended soul*
> *Woo terror to delight us.*"

In Roderic is a fine and characteristic image—

> "Toward the troop he spread his arms,
> As if the expanded soul diffused itself,
> And carried to all spirits with the act
> Its affluent inspiration."

The description of moonlight in this poem, so justly admired, we perceive by one of the author's letters,

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was drawn from an actual scene, which evidences the absolute need of strong personal impressions even for an imaginative poet. The description of the ruins of Babylon, in Thalaba—

"The many-coloured domes yet wore one dusky hue"—

is one of the happiest examples of Southey's powers of language, and musical adaptation of rhythm to sense. To one having a natural feeling of wonder and fine elocutionary powers, it is susceptible of the most solemn recitative effect. The beautiful passage in his "Curse of Kehama," commencing, "They sin who tell us love can die," the ballads of "Mary of the Inn" and "The Battle of Blenheim," the "Verses to a Dead Friend," and "The Holly Tree," are among the fugitive pieces written from actual emotion, which illustrate Southey's affections, and have endeared him as a lyrist.

Southey remarks, in one of his letters, that he most nearly resembles Chiarbrera, an Italian bard of the fifteenth century, who enjoyed high honours for his verses, and died at a prosperous old age. His works are comparatively neglected at present; but Maffei, the literary historian, ascribes his success to merits very similar to those we have recognized in Southey. According to this critic, it was a saying of Chiarbrera that he wished to follow the example of Columbus and discover a new world or perish, and that poetry should "lift the eyebrow;"

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thus declaring surprise to be the great effect, and novelty the great means of poetic excellence. Accordingly, his verse was prized chiefly for its style, which innovated greatly upon familiar models, and for its erudition, which was remarkable for that day. Thus his renown was gained by ingenuity and scholarship rather than through intense natural sympathy or genuine inspiration. We therefore find Southey's own estimate of his poetry, in a great degree, confirms our own. But this coincidence is as clearly, though less directly, suggested by his casual observations on the art, in his letters to cotemporary writers, his advice to young poets who sought encouragement from his counsel.

It is obvious, from the incidental views thus honestly expressed, that he had not a vivid and permanent consciousness of a poet's birthright; that the art was too much a branch of authorship, and too little a sacred instinct in his estimation; and that the more erratic versifiers of the age, less elaborate, but far more intense and genuine, won their larger popularity on legitimate grounds. He tells one of his correspondents, who had solicited his opinion of a poem, that his friends reckon him "a very capricious and uncertain judge of poetry;" and elsewhere, in speaking of the error which identifies the power of enjoying natural beauty with that of producing poetry, he says, "One is a gift of heaven, and conduces immeasurably to the happiness of those who enjoy it; the second has

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much more of a knack in it than the pride of poets is always willing to admit." If Southey's poetic faculty and feeling had been equal to his "knack" of versifying, he would have been quite as reluctant to ascribe to ingenuity what was consciously derived from a power above the will. Perhaps he was chagrined into this commonplace view of the art by the fact that, while Scott was receiving three thousand guineas for the "Lady of the Lake," the "Curse of Kehama" was going through the press at the expense of Landor.

The professional character of Southey's life is almost incompatible with the highest literary results. His great merit as a writer consists in the utility of a portion of his works, and their unexceptionable morality and good sense. The most surprising quality he exhibited as an author was industry. His name is thoroughly respectable in literature as it was in life; but it would be unjust to the chivalric and earnest genius of the age, elsewhere manifested in deeper and more significant, though less voluminous records, to award to Southey either the title of a great poet or a leader of opinion. His career, in regard to the latter, is clearly explained in his biography. We perceive that, even in boyhood, the intellect predominated in his nature. In the heyday of his blood, the companionship of bolder spirits and less chastened enthusiasts, the infectious atmosphere of the French Revolution and the acti-

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vity of the poetical instinct, not yet formalized into service, made him, for a while, the independent thinker in religion and politics, and induced visions of social equality which he hoped to realize across the sea. But early domestic ties and a natural love of study won him gradually back to conservative quietude. More than either of his brother poets, Southey had the temperament and taste of a scholar. He neither felt as deeply nor dreamed as habitually as Coleridge. The sensuous and the imaginative were not so united in his being with the intellectual He needed less excitement; his spirit was far less adventurous; and life did not press upon and around him with such prophetic and inciting power.

It is needless to ascribe the change in his views altogether to interest; this may have had its influence, but the character of the man yields a far more natural solution of the problem. He was doubtless as sincere when he accepted the laureateship as when he wrote "Wat Tyler;" but, in the latter case, his "blood and judgment were not well commingled." Southey, the Bristol youth, penniless, aspiring, and fed with the daily manna of poetic communion, looked upon society with different eyes than Southey, the recognized English author, resident of Cumberland, and father of a family. This district is famous for its lead-pencils, as well as its fine scenery, and was thus as well adapted by

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nature for a scribe as a bard or prophet. In the former vocation, though not in its highest sense, lay the force and aim of Southey. He knew how to use materials aptly, how to weave into connected and intelligible narrative the crude and fragmentary data of history and memoirs. In this manner, he greatly served all readers of English. His "Life of Wesley" is the most authentic and lucid exposition of an extraordinary phase of the religious sentiment on record. Of Brazil and the Peninsular War, he has chronicled memorable things in a perspicuous style. Few pictures of British life are more true to fact and suggestive than "Espriella's Letters." The "Life of Nelson" is a model of unaffected, direct narrative, allowing the facts to speak for themselves through the clearest possible medium of expression; and yet this most popular of Southey's books, far from being the offspring of any strong personal sympathy or perception, was so entirely a literary job, that he says it was thrust upon him, and that he moved among the sea terms like a cat among crockery. For a considerable period after the establishment of the 'Quarterly,' he found reviews the most profitable labour. Many of these are judicious and informing, but they seldom quicken or elevate either by rhetorical or reflective energy, and are too often special pleas to excite great interest. Those on purely literary subjects, however, are agreeable.

If we were to name, in a single term, the quality

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for which Southey is eminent, we should call him a verbal architect. His prose works do not open to our mental gaze new and wondrous vistas of thought; they are not deeply impressive from the greatness, or strangely winsome from the beauty of their ideas. Their rhetoric does not warm and stir the mind, nor is their scope highly philosophic or gracefully picturesque. But their style is correct, unaffected, and keeps that medium which good taste approves in manners, speech, and costume, but which we seldom see transferred to the art of writing. For pure narrative, where the object is to give the reader unalloyed facts, and leave his own reflection and fancy to shape and colour them, no English author has surpassed Southey. He appears to have been quite conscious of the moderate standard to which he aspired: "As to what is called fine writing," he says, "the public will get none of that article out of me: sound sense, sound philosophy, and sound English I will give them." There is no doubt, in so doing, he consulted the Anglo-Saxon love of regulated and useful principles and hatred of extravagance, and was thus an admirable type of the modern English mind; but such an ideal, however praiseworthy and respectable, scarcely coincides with the more noble and inspired mood in which the permanent masterpieces of literary genius are conceived and executed.

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THE PIONEER:

DANIEL BOONE.

THERE hung, for many months, on the walls of the Art-Union gallery in New-York, a picture by Ranney, so thoroughly national in its subject and true to nature in its execution, that it was refreshing to contemplate it, after being wearied with far more ambitious yet less successful attempts. It represented a flat ledge of rock, the summit of a high cliff that projected over a rich, umbrageous country, upon which a band of hunters leaning on their rifles, were gazing with looks of delighted surprise. The foremost, a compact and agile, though not very commanding figure, is pointing out the landscape to his comrades, with an air of exultant yet calm satisfaction; the wind lifts his thick hair from a brow full of energy and perception; his loose hunting shirt, his easy attitude, the fresh brown tint of his cheek, and an ingenuous, cheerful, determined yet benign expression of countenance, proclaim the hunter and pioneer, the Columbus of the woods,

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the forest philosopher and brave champion. The picture represents Daniel Boone discovering to his companions the fertile levels of Kentucky. This remarkable man, although he does not appear to have originated any great plans or borne the responsibility of an appointed leader in the warlike expeditions in which he was engaged, possessed one of those rarely balanced natures, and that unpretending efficiency of character which, though seldom invested with historical prominence, abound in personal interest. Without political knowledge, he sustained an infant settlement; destitute of a military education, he proved one of the most formidable antagonists the Indians ever encountered; with no pretensions to a knowledge of civil engineering, he laid out the first road through the wilderness of Kentucky; unfamiliar with books, he reflected deeply and attained to philosophical convictions that yielded him equanimity of mind; devoid of poetical expression, he had an extraordinary feeling for natural beauty, and described his sensations and emotions, amid the wild seclusion of the forest, as prolific of delight; with manners entirely simple and unobtrusive, there was not the least rudeness in his demeanour; and relentless in fight, his disposition was thoroughly humane; his rifle and his cabin, with the freedom of the woods, satisfied his wants; the sense of insecurity in which no small portion of his life was passed, only rendered him circumspect; and his trials induced a serene patience and fortitude; while his

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love of adventure was a ceaseless inspiration. Such a man forms an admirable progenitor in that nursery of character—the West: and a fine contrast to the development elsewhere induced by the spirit of trade and political ambition; like the rudely sculptured calumets picked up on the plantations of Kentucky—memorials of a primitive race, whose mounds and copper utensils yet attest a people antecedent to the Indians that fled before the advancing settlements of Boone—his character indicates for the descendants of the hunters and pioneers, a brave, independent, and noble ancestry. Thus, as related to the diverse forms of national character in the various sections of the country, as well as on account of its intrinsic attractiveness, the western pioneer is an object of peculiar interest; and the career of Boone is alike distinguished for its association with romantic adventure and historical fact.

A consecutive narrative, however, would yield but an ineffective picture of his life as it exists in the light of sympathetic reflection. The pioneer, like the mariner, alternates between long uneventful periods and moments fraught with excitement; the forest, like the ocean, is monotonous as well as grand; and its tranquil beauty, for weeks together, may not be sublimated by terror; yet in both spheres there is an under-current of suggestive life, and when the spirit of conflict and vigilance sleeps, that of contemplation is often alive. Perhaps it is this very succession of "moving acci-

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dents" and lonely quiet, of solemn repose and intense activity, that constitutes the fascination which the sea and the wilderness possess for imaginative minds. They appeal at once to poetical and heroic instincts: and these are more frequently combined in the same individual, than we usually suppose. Before attempting to realize the characteristics of Boone in their unity, we must note the salient points in his experience; and this is best done by reviving a few scenes which typify the whole drama.

It is midnight in the forest; and, through the interstices of its thickly woven branches, pale moonbeams glimmer on the emerald sward. The only sounds that break upon the brooding silence, are an occasional gust of wind amid the branches of the loftier trees, the hooting of an owl, and, sometimes, the wild cry of a beast disappointed of his prey, or scared by the dusky figure of a savage on guard at a watch-fire. Beside its glowing embers, and leaning against the huge trunk of a gigantic hemlock, sit two girls whose complexion and habiliments indicate their Anglo-Saxon origin; their hands are clasped together, and one appears to sleep as her head rests upon her companion's shoulder. They are very pale, and an expression of anxiety is evident in the very firmness of their resigned looks. A slight rustle in the thick undergrowth near their camp, causes the Indian sentinel to rise quickly to his feet and peer in the direction of the sound; a moment after he leaps up, with a piercing

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shout, and falls bleeding upon the ground, while the crack of a rifle echoes through the wood: in an instant twenty Indians spring from around the fire, raise the war-whoop, and brandish their tomahawks; but three or four instantly drop before the deadly aim of the invaders, several run howling with pain into the depths of the forest, and the remainder set off on an opposite trail. Then calmly, but with an earnest joy, revealed by the dying flames upon his features, a robust, compactly knit figure, moves with a few hasty strides towards the females, gazes eagerly into their faces, lifts one in his arms and presses her momentarily to his breast, gives a hasty order, and his seven companions with the three in their midst, rapidly retrace their way over the tangled brushwood and amid the pillared trunks, until they come out, at dawn, upon a clearing, studded with enormous roots, among which waves the tasselled maize, beside a spacious log-dwelling surrounded by a pallisade. An eager, tearful group rush out to meet them; and the weary and hungry band are soon discussing their midnight adventure over a substantial breakfast of game. Thus Boone rescued his daughter and her friend when they were taken captive by the Indians, within sight of his primitive dwelling;—an incident which illustrates more than pages of description, how closely pioneer presses upon savage life, and with what peril civilization encroaches upon the domain of nature.

It is the dawn of a spring day in the wilderness;

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as steals the gray pearly light over the densely waving tree-tops, an eagle majestically rises from a withered bough, and floats through the silent air, becoming a mere speck on the sky ere he disappears over the distant mountains; dew-drops are condensed on the green threads of the pine and the swollen buds of the hickory; pale bulbs and spears of herbage shoot from the black loam, amid the decayed leaves; in the inmost recesses of the wood, the rabbit's tread is audible, and the chirp of the squirrel.

As the sunshine expands, a thousand notes of birds at work on their nests, invade the solitude; the bear fearlessly laps the running stream, and the elk turns his graceful head from the pendant branch he is nibbling, at an unusual sound from the adjacent cane-brake. It is a lonely man rising from his night slumber; with his blanket on his arm and his rifle grasped in one hand, he approaches the brook and bathes his head and neck; then glancing around, turns aside the interwoven thickets near by, and climbs a stony mound shadowed by a fine clump of oaks, where stands an humble but substantial cabin; he lights a fire upon the flat stone before the entrance, kneads a cake of maize, while his venison steak is broiling, and carefully examines the priming of his rifle. The meal dispatched with a hearty relish, he closes the door of his lodge, and saunters through the wilderness; his eye roves from the wild flower at his feet, to the cliff that looms afar off; he pauses in

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admiration before some venerable sylvan monarch; watches the bounding stag his intrusion has disturbed; cuts a little spray from the sassafras, with the knife in his girdle.

As the sun rises higher, he penetrates deeper into the vast and beautiful forest; each form of vegetable life, from the enormous fungi to the delicate vine-wreath, the varied structure of the trees, the cries and motions of the wild animals and birds, excite in his mind a delightful sense of infinite power and beauty; he feels, as he walks, in every nerve and vein the "glorious privilege of being independent;" reveries that bathe his soul in a tranquil yet lofty pleasure, succeed each other; and the sight of some lovely vista induces him to lie down upon a heap of dead leaves and lose himself in contemplation. Weariness and hunger, or the deepening gloom of approaching night, at length warn him to retrace his steps; on the way, he shoots a wild turkey for his supper, sits over the watch-fire, beneath the solemn firmament of stars, and recalls the absent and loved through the first watches of the night. Months have elapsed since he has thus lived alone in the wilderness, his brother having left him to seek ammunition and provision at distant settlements. Despondency, for awhile, rendered his loneliness oppressive, but such is his love of nature and freedom, his zest for life in the woods and a natural self-reliance, that gradually he attains a degree of happiness which

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De Foe's hero might have envied. Nature is a benign mother, and whispers consoling secrets to attentive ears, and mysteriously cheers the heart of her pure votaries who truthfully cast themselves on her bosom.

Not thus serenely however glides away the forest life of our pioneer. He is jealously watched by the Indians, upon whose hunting-grounds he is encroaching: they steal upon his retreat and make him captive, and in this situation a new phase of his character exhibits itself. The soul that has been in long and intimate communion with natural grandeur and beauty, and learned the scope and quality of its own resources, gains self-possession and foresight. The prophets of old did not resort to the desert in vain; and the bravery and candour of hunters and seamen is partly the result of the isolation and hardihood of their lives. Boone excelled as a sportsman; he won the respect of his savage captors by his skill and fortitude; and more than once, without violence, emancipated himself, revealed their bloody schemes to his countrymen, and met them on the battle-field, with a coldness and celerity that awoke their intense astonishment. Again, and again, he saw his companions fall before their tomahawks and rifles; his daughter, as we have seen, was stolen from his very door, though fortunately rescued; his son fell before his eyes in a conflict with the Indians who opposed their emigration to Kentucky; his brother and his dearest friends were victims either to their strategy or violence; his own

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immunity is to be accounted for by the influence he had acquired over his foes, which induced them often to spare his life—an influence derived from the extraordinary tact, patience, and facility of action, which his experience and character united to foster.

Two other scenes of his career are requisite to the picture. On the banks of the Missouri river, less than forty years ago, there stood a few small rude cabins in the shape of a hollow square; in one of these, the now venerable figure of the gallant hunter is listlessly stretched upon a couch; a slice of buck twisted on the ramrod of his rifle, is roasting by the fire, within reach of his hand; he is still alone, but the surrounding cabins are occupied by his thriving descendants. The vital energies of the pioneer are gradually ebbing away, though his thick white locks, well-knit frame, and the light of his keen eye, evidence the genuineness and prolonged tenure of his life. Over-matched by the conditions of the land law in Kentucky, and annoyed by the march of civilization in the regions he had known in their primitive beauty, he had wandered here, far from the state he founded and the haunts of his manhood, to die with the same adventurous and independent spirit in which he had lived. He occupied some of the irksome hours of confinement incident to age, in polishing his own cherrywood coffin; and it is said he was found dead in the woods at last, a few rods from his dwelling.

On an autumn day, six years since, a hearse might

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have been seen winding up the main street of Frankfort, Kentucky, drawn by white horses, and garlanded with evergreens. The pall-bearers comprised some of the most distinguished men of the state. It was the second funeral of Daniel Boone. By an act of the legislature, his remains were removed from the banks of the Missouri to the public cemetery of the capitol of Kentucky, and there deposited with every ceremonial of respect and love.

This oblation was in the highest degree just and appropriate, for the name of Boone is identified with the state he originally explored, and his character associates itself readily with that of her people and scenery. No part of the country is more individual in these respects than Kentucky. As the word imports, it was at once the hunting and battle-ground of savage tribes for centuries: and not until the middle of the eighteenth century, was it well-known to Anglo-Saxon explorers. The elk and buffalo held undisputed possession with the Indian; its dark forests served as a contested boundary between the Cherokees, Creeks and Catawbas of the South, and the Shawnees, Delawares and Wyandots of the North; and to these inimical tribes it was indeed "a dark and bloody ground."

Unauthenticated expeditions thither we hear of before that of Boone, but with his first visit the history of the region becomes clear and progressive, remarkable for its rapid and steady progress and singular fortunes.

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The same year that Independence was declared, Virginia, made a county of the embryo state, and forts scattered at intervals over the face of the country, alone yielded refuge to the colonists from their barbarian invaders. In 1778, Du Quesne, with his Canadian and Indian army, met with a vigorous repulse at Boonesborough; in 1778, occurred Roger Clark's brilliant expedition against the English forts of Vincennes and Kaskaskias: and the next year, a single blockhouse—the forlorn hope of advancing civilization—was erected by Robert Patterson where Lexington now stands; soon after took place the unfortunate expedition of Col. Bowman against the Indians of Chilicothe; and the Virginian legislature passed the celebrated land law. This enactment neglected to provide for a general survey at the expense of the government; each holder of a warrant located therefore at pleasure, and made his own survey; yet a special entry was required by the law in order clearly to designate boundaries; the vagueness of many entries rendered the titles null: those of Boone and men similarly unacquainted with legal writing, were, of course, destitute of any accuracy of description; and hence interminable perplexity, disputes and forfeitures. The immediate consequences of the law, however, was to induce a flood of emigration; and the fever of land speculation rose and spread to an unexampled height; to obtain patents for rich lands became the ruling passion; and simultaneous Indian hostilities prevailed

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—so that Kentucky was transformed, all at once, from an agricultural and hunting region thinly peopled, to an arena where rapacity and war swayed a vast multitude. The conflicts, law-suits, border adventures, and personal feuds growing out of this condition of affairs, would yield memorable themes, without number, for the annalist. To this epoch succeeded "a labyrinth of conventions."

The position of Kentucky was anomalous; the appendage of a state unable to protect her frontier from savage invasion; her future prosperity in a great measure dependent upon the glorious river that bounded her domain, and the United States government already proposing to yield the right of its navigation to a foreign power; separated by the Alleghany mountains from the populous and cultivated East; and the tenure by which estates were held within its limits quite unsettled, it is scarcely to be wondered at, that reckless political adventurers began to look upon Kentucky as a promising sphere for their intrigues. Without adverting to any particular instances, or renewing the inquiry into the motives of prominent actors in those scenes, it is interesting to perceive how entirely the intelligence and honour of the people triumphed over selfish ambition and cunning artifice. Foreign governments and domestic traitors failed in their schemes to alienate the isolated state from the growing confederacy; repulsed as she was again and again in her attempts to secure con-

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stitutional freedom, she might have said to the parent government, with the repudiated "lady wedded to the Moor"—

> "Unkindness may do much,
> And your unkindness may achieve my life,
> But never taint my love."

Kentucky was admitted into the Union on the fourth of February, 1791.

From this outline of her history, we can readily perceive how rich and varied was the material whence has sprung the Western character; its highest phase is doubtless to be found in Kentucky; and, in our view, best illustrates American in distinction from European civilization. In the North this is essentially modified by the cosmopolite influence of the seaboard, and in the South, by a climate which assimilates her people with those of the same latitudes elsewhere; but in the West, and especially in Kentucky, we find the foundation of social existence laid by the hunters—whose love of the woods, equality of condition, habits of sport and agriculture, and distance from conventionalities, combine to nourish independence, strength of mind, candour, and a fresh and genial spirit. The ease and freedom of social intercourse, the abeyance of the passion for gain; and the scope given to the play of character, accordingly developed a noble race.

We can scarcely imagine a more appropriate figure in the foreground of the picture than Daniel Boone, who embodies the honesty, intelligence and chivalric

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spirit of the state. With a population, descended from the extreme sections of the land, from emigrants of New England as well as Virginia and North Carolina, and whose immediate progenitors were chiefly agricultural gentlemen, a generous and spirited character might have been prophesied of the natives of Kentucky; and it is in the highest degree natural for a people thus descended and with such habits, to cling with entire loyalty to their parent government, and to yield, as they did, ardent though injudicious sympathy to France in the hour of her revolutionary crisis. Impulsive and honourable, her legitimate children belong to the aristocracy of nature; without the general intellectual refinement of the Atlantic states, they possess a far higher physical development and richer social instincts; familiar with the excessive development of the religious and political sentiments, in all varieties and degrees, their views are more broad though less discriminate than those entertained in older communities. The Catholic from Maryland, the Puritan from Connecticut, and the Churchman of Carolina, amicably flourish together; and the conservative and fanatic are alike undisturbed; the convent and the camp-meeting being, often within sight of each other, equally respected.

Nature, too, has been as liberal as the social elements in endowing Kentucky with interesting associations. That mysterious fifteen miles of subterranean wonders known as the Mammoth Cave,—its wonder-

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ful architecture, fossil remains, nitrous atmosphere, echoes, fish with only the rudiment of an optic nerve, —its chasms and cataracts—is one of the most remarkable objects in the world. The boundaries of the state are unequalled in beauty; on the east the Laurel Ridge or Cumberland Mountain, and on the west the Father of Waters. In native trees she is peculiarly rich—the glorious magnolia, the prolific sugar-tree, the laurel and the buckeye, the hickory and honey locust, the mulberry, ash, and flowing catalpa, attest in every village and roadside, the sylvan aptitudes of the soil; while the thick buffalo grass and finest crown-imperial in the world, clothe it with a lovely garniture. The blue limestone formation predominates, and its grotesque cliffs and caverns render much of the geological scenery peculiar and interesting.

The lover of the picturesque and characteristic, must often regret that artistic and literary genius has not adequately preserved the original local and social features of our own primitive communities. Facility of intercourse and the assimilating influence of trade are rapidly bringing the traits and tendencies of all parts of the country to a common level; yet in the natives of each section in whom strong idiosyncrasies have kept intact the original bias of character, we find the most striking and suggestive diversity. According to the glimpses afforded us by tradition, letters, and as few meagre biographical data, the early

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settlers of Kentucky united to the simplicity and honesty of the New-York colonists, a high degree of chivalrie feeling; there was an heroic vein induced by familiarity with danger, the necessity of mutual protection and the healthful excitement of the chase. The absence of any marked distinction of birth or fortune, and the high estimate placed upon society by those who dwell on widely separated plantations, caused a remarkably cordial, hospitable and warm intercourse to prevail, almost unknown at the North and East. Family honour was cherished with peculiar zeal; and the women, accustomed to equestrian exercises and brought up in the freedom and isolation of nature—their sex always respected and their charms thoroughly appreciated—acquired a spirited and cheerful development quite in contrast to the subdued, uniform tone of those educated in the commercial towns; their mode of life naturally generated self-reliance and evoked a spirit of independence.

Most articles in use were of domestic manufacture; slavery was more patriarchal in its character than in the other states; the practice of duelling, with its inevitable miseries, had also the effect to give a certain tone to social life rarely witnessed in agricultural districts; and the Kentucky gentleman was thus early initiated into the manly qualities of a Nimrod and the engaging and reliable one of a man of honour and gallantry—in its best sense. It is to circumstances like these that we attribute the chivalric spirit of the

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state. She was a somewhat wild member of the confederacy—a kind of spoiled younger child, with the faults and the virtues incident to her age and fortunes; nerved by long vigils at the outposts of civilization,—the wild cat invading her first school-houses and the Indians her scattered cornfields,—and receiving little parental recognition from the central government,—with a primitive loyalty of heart, she repudiated the intrigues of Genet and Burr, and baptized her counties for such national patriots as Fulton and Gallatin.

Passing through a fiery ordeal of Indian warfare, the fever of land speculation, great political vicissitude, unusual legal perplexities, imperfect legislation, and subsequently entire financial derangement,—she has yet maintained a progressive and individual attitude; and seems in her most legitimate specimens of character, more satisfactorily to represent the national type, than any other state. Her culture has not been as refined, nor her social spirit as versatile and elegant as in older communities, but a raciness, hardihood and genial freshness of nature have, for those very reasons, more completely survived; as a region whence to transplant or graft, if we may apply horticultural terms to humanity, Kentucky is a rich garden. Nor have these distinctions ceased to be. Her greatest statesman, in the nobleness of his character and the extraordinary personal regard he inspires, admirably illustrates the community of

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which Boone was the characteristic pioneer; and the volunteers of Kentucky, in the Indian wars, under Harrison, and more recently in Mexico, have continued to vindicate their birthright of valour; while one of her most accomplished daughters sends a magnificent bed-quilt, wrought by her own hands, to the World's Fair.

A Pennsylvanian by birth, Boone early emigrated to North Carolina. He appears to have first visited Kentucky in 1769. The bounty lands awarded to the Virginia troops induced surveying expeditions to the Ohio river; and when Col. Henderson, in 1775, purchased from the Cherokees, the country south of the Kentucky river, the knowledge which two years exploration had given Boone of the region, and his already established reputation for firmness and adventure, caused him to be employed to survey the country, the fertility and picturesque charms of which had now become celebrated. Accordingly, the pioneer having satisfactorily laid out a road through the wilderness, not without many fierce encounters with the Aborigines, chose a spot to erect his log-house, which afterwards became the nucleus of a colony, and the germ of a prosperous State, on the site of the present town of Boonesborough.

While transporting his family thither, they were surprised by the Indians, and, after severe loss, so far discouraged in their enterprise as to return to the nearest settlements: and on the first summer of their

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residence in Kentucky occurred the bold abduction of the two young girls, to which we have previously referred. In 1778, while engaged in making salt with thirty men, at the lower Blue Licks, Boone was captured, and while his companions were taken to Detroit on terms of capitulation, he was retained as a prisoner, though kindly treated and allowed to hunt. At Chillicothe he witnessed the extensive preparations of the Indians to join a Canadian expedition against the infant settlement; and effecting his escape, succeeded in reaching home in time to warn the garrison and prepare for its defence. For nine days he was besieged by an army of five hundred Indians and whites, when the enemy abandoned their project in despair.

In 1782 he was engaged in the memorable and disastrous battle of Blue Licks, and accompanied Gen. Clarke on his expedition to avenge it. In the succeeding year, peace with England being declared, the pioneer saw the liberty and civilization of the country he had known as a wilderness, only inhabited by wild beasts and savages, guaranteed and established. In 1779, having laid out the chief of his little property in land warrants,—on his way from Kentucky to Richmond, he was robbed of twenty thousand dollars; wiser claimants, versed in the legal conditions, deprived him of his lands; disappointed and impatient, he left the glorious domain he had originally explored and nobly defended, and became

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a voluntary subject of the King of Spain, by making a new forest home on the banks of the Missouri. An excursion he undertook, in 1816, to Fort Osage, a hundred miles from his lodge, evidences the unimpaired vigour of his declining years.

So indifferent to gain was Boone that he neglected to secure a fine estate rather than incur the trouble of a visit to New Orleans. An autograph letter, still extant, proves that he was not illiterate; and Governor Dunmore of Virginia, had such entire confidence in his vigilance and integrity, that he employed him to conduct surveyors eight hundred miles through the forest to the falls of the Ohio, gave him command of three frontier stations, and sent him to negociate treaties with the Cherokees. It was a fond boast with him that the first white women that ever stood on the banks of the Kentucky river, were his wife and daughter, and that his axe cleft the first tree whose timbers laid the foundation of a permanent settlement in the State; he had the genuine ambition of a pioneer and the native taste for life in the woods embodied in the foresters of Scott and the Leather-stocking of Cooper. He possessed that restless impulse—the instinct of adventure—the poetry of action. It has been justly said that "he was seldom taken by surprise, never shrunk from danger, nor cowered beneath exposure and fatigue." So accurate were his woodland observations and memory, that he recognised an ash-tree which he had notched twenty

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years before, to identify a locality; and proved the accuracy of his designation by stripping off the new bark and exposing the marks of his axe beneath. His aim was so certain, that he could with ease bark a squirrel, that is, bring down the animal, when on the top of the loftiest tree, by knocking off the bark immediately beneath, killing him by the concussion.

The union of beauty and terror in the life of a pioneer, of so much natural courage and thoughtfulness as Boone, is one of its most significant features. We have followed his musing steps through the wide, umbrageous solitudes he loved, and marked the contentment he experienced in a log-hut, and by a camp-fire; but over this attractive picture there ever impended the shadow of peril—in the form of a stealthy and cruel foe, the wolf, disease, and exposure to the elements. Enraged at the invasion of their ancient hunting-grounds, the Indians hovered near; while asleep in the jungle, following the plough, or at his frugal meal, the pioneer was liable to be shot down by an unseen rifle, and surrounded by an ambush; from the tranquil pursuits of agriculture, at any moment, he might be summoned to the battle-field, to rescue a neighbour's property or defend a solitary outpost. The senses become acute, the mind vigilant, and the tone of feeling chivalric under such discipline. That life has a peculiar dignity, even in the midst of privation and however devoid of refined culture, which is entirely self-dependent both for sustainment and

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protection. It has, too, a singular freshness and animation the more genial from being naturally inspired. Compare the spasmodic efforts at hilarity, the forced speech and hackneyed expression of the fashionable drawing-room, with the candid mirth and gallant spirit born of the woodland and the chase;—the powerful sinews and well-braced nerves of the pioneer with the languid pulse of the metropolitan exquisite;—and it seems as if the fountain of youth still bubbled up in some deep recess of the forest. Philosophy, too, as well as health, is attainable in the woods, as Shakespeare has illustrated in "As You Like It;" and Boone by his example and habitual sentiments. He said to his brother, when they had lived for months in the yet unexplored wilds of Kentucky, "You see how little human nature requires. It is in our own hearts rather than in the things around us, that we are to seek felicity. A man may be happy in any state. It only asks a perfect resignation to the will of Providence." It is remarkable that the two American characters which chiefly interested Byron, were Patrick Henry and Daniel Boone—the one for his gift of oratory, and the other for his philosophical content—both so directly springing from the resources of nature.

There is an affinity between man and nature which conventional habits keep in abeyance, but do not extinguish. It is manifested in the prevalent taste for scenery, and the favour so readily bestowed upon

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its graphic delineation in art or literature; but in addition to the poetic love of nature, as addressed to the sense of beauty, or that ardent curiosity to explore its laws and phenomena which finds expression in natural science, there is an instinct that leads to a keen relish of nature in her primeval state, and a facility in embracing the life she offers in her wild and solitary haunts; a feeling that seems to have survived the influences of civilization, and develops, when encouraged, by the inevitable law of animal instinct. It is not uncommon to meet with this passion for nature among those whose lives have been devoted to objects apparently alien to its existence; sportsmen, pedestrians, and citizens of rural propensities, indicate its modified action, while it is more emphatically exhibited by the volunteers who join in caravans to the Rocky Mountains, the deserts of the East, and the forests of Central and South America, with no ostensible purpose but the gratification arising from intimate contact with nature in her luxuriant or barren solitudes.

To one having but an inkling of this sympathy, with a nervous organization and an observant mind, there is, indeed, no restorative of the frame or sweet diversion to the mind like a day in the woods. The effect of roaming a treeless plain or riding over a cultivated region is entirely different. There is a certain tranquillity and balm in the forest that heals and calms the fevered spirit and quickens the languid pulses of the

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weary and the disheartened with the breath of hope. Its influence on the animal spirits is remarkable; and the senses, released from the din and monotonous limits of streets and houses, luxuriate in the breadth of vision and the rich variety of form, hue and odour which only scenes like these afford. As you walk in the shadow of lofty trees, the repose and awe of hearts that breathe from a sacred temple, gradually lulls the tide of care and exalts despondency into worship. As your eye tracks the flickering light glancing upon the herbage, it brightens to recognize the wild-flowers that are associated with the innocent enjoyments of childhood; to note the delicate blossom of the wild hyacinth, see the purple asters wave in the breeze, and the scarlet berries of the winter-green glow among the dead leaves, or mark the circling flight of the startled crow and the sudden leap of the squirrel.

You pause unconsciously to feel the springy velvet of the moss-clump, pluck up the bulb of the broad-leaved sanguinaria, or examine the star-like flower of the liverwort, and then lifting your gaze to the canopy, beneath which you lovingly stroll, greet as old and endeared acquaintances the noble trees in their autumn splendour,—the crimson dogwood, yellow hickory or scarlet maple, whose brilliant hues mingle and glow in the sunshine like the stained windows of an old gothic cathedral; and you feel that it is as true to fact as to poetry that "the groves were God's first temples." Every fern at your feet is as daintily

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carved as the frieze of a Grecian column; every vista down which you look, wears more than Egyptian solemnity; the withered leaves rustle like the sighs of penitents, and the lofty tree-tops send forth a voice like that of prayer. Fresh vines encumber aged trunks, solitary leaves quiver slowly to the earth, a twilight hue chastens the brightness of noon, and, all around, is the charm of a mysterious quietude and seclusion that induces a dreamy and reverential mood; while health seems wafted from the balsamic pine and the elastic turf, and over all broods the serene blue firmament.

If such refreshment and inspiration are obtainable from a casual and temporary visit to the woods, we may imagine the effect of a lengthened sojourn in the primeval forest, upon a nature alive to its beauty, wildness and solitude; and when we add to these, the zest of adventure, the pride of discovery, and that feeling of sublimity, which arises from a consciousness of danger always impending, it is easy to realize in the experience of a pioneer at once the most romantic and practical elements of life. In American history, rich as it is in this species of adventure, no individual is so attractive and prominent as Daniel Boone. The singular union in his character of benevolence and hardihood, bold activity and a meditative disposition, the hazardous enterprises and narrow escapes recorded of him, and the resolute tact he displayed in all emergencies, are materials quite adequate to a thrilling narra-

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tive; but when we add to the external phases of interest, that absolute passion for forest life which distinguished him, and the identity of his name with the early fortunes of the West, he seems to combine the essential features of a genuine historical and thoroughly individual character.

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THE LANDSCAPE PAINTER:

JOHN CONSTABLE.

THE quiet and isolated life of a genuine landscape-painter has seldom been more consistently illustrated than in the memoirs of John Constable. His letters, collected and arranged by his friend Leslie, open to our view an existence ideal in spirit, and the more remarkable from the absolute contrast it affords to the frivolous, versatile and bustling social atmosphere in which it was chiefly passed. Indeed it may be said to embody the most natural and characteristic phase of English life—the rural sentiment, if we may so call it—for to Constable this was the inspiration and the central light of experience. He first rises to the imagination as "the handsome miller" of a highly-cultivated and picturesque district in Suffolk; and, since Tennyson's charming poem of the "Miller's Daughter," a romantic association easily attaches itself to that location. To the young artist, however, it was actually a better initiation to his future pursuit

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than might readily be supposed. Two phases of nature, or rather the aspects of two of her least appreciated phenomena, were richly unfolded to his observant eye—the wind and sky—and to his early and habitual study of these may be ascribed the singular truthfulness of his delineation, and the loyal manner in which he adhered, through life, to the facts of scenery.

It seems to us that the process by which he arrived at what may be called the original elements of his art, is identic with that of Wordsworth in poetry; and his admiration of the bard arose not more from just perception than from the possession of a like idiosyncrasy. They resemble each other in discovering beauty and interest in the humblest and most familiar objects; and in an unswerving faith in the essential charm of nature under every guise. Thus the very names of Constable's best pictures evince a bold simplicity of taste akin to that which at first brought ridicule and afterwards homage to the venerated poet. A mill with its usual natural accessories continued a favourite subject with the painter to the last; and he sorely grieved when a fire destroyed the first specimen that his pencil immortalized. A harvest field, a village church, a ford, a pier, a heath, a wain—scenes exhibited to his eye in boyhood, and to the daily vision of farmers, sportsmen, and country-gentlemen—were those to which his sympathies habitually clung. No compliment

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seems ever to have delighted him more than the remark of a stranger, in the Suffolk coach, "This is Constable's county." His custom was to pass weeks in the fields, and sketch clouds, trees, uplands—whatever object or scene could be rendered picturesque on canvass; to gather herbs, mosses, coloured earth, feathers, and lichens, and imitate their hues exactly. So intent was he at times in sketching, that field mice would creep unalarmed into his pockets. But perhaps the natural beauties that most strongly attracted him were evanescent;—the sweep of a cloud, the gathering of a tempest, the effect of wind on cornfields, woods and streams, and, above all, the play of light and shade. So truly were these depicted, that Fuseli declared he often was disposed to call for his coat and umbrella before one of Constable's landscapes representing a transition state of the elements.

If there be a single genuine poetic instinct in the English mind, it is that which allies them to country-life. The poets of this nation have never been excelled either in rural description or in conveying the sentiment to which such tastes gave birth. What we recognize in Constable is the artistic development of this national trait. We perceive at a glance that he was "native here and to the manner born." There is an utter absence of exaggeration—at least in the still-life of his pictures—while no one can mistake the latitude of his atmospheres. They are not American, nor European, but thoroughly English. A great

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source of his aptitude was a remarkable local attachment. He not only saw distinctly the minute features of a limited scene or a characteristic group of objects, but he loved them. He had the fondness for certain rural spots which Lamb confessed for particular metropolitan haunts; and, therefore, it was not necessary for him, in order to paint with feeling, to combine scattered beauties, as is the case with less individual limners, nor to borrow or invent accessories to set off his chosen subject—but only to elicit, by patient attention, such favourable moments and incidents as were best fitted to exhibit it to advantage.

In this way, few painters have done more to suggest the infinite natural resources of their art. Its poetry to him was twofold—consisting of the associations and of the intrinsic beauty of the scene. There is often evident in genius a kind of sublime common sense—an intuitive intelligence which careless observers mistake sometimes for obstinacy or waywardness. Constable displayed it in fidelity to his sphere, notwithstanding many temptations to wander from it. He felt that portrait and historical painting were not akin either to his taste or highest ability: and that the ambitious and elaborate in landscape would give no scope to his talent; in his view Art was not less a thing of feeling than of knowledge; and it was a certain indescribable sentiment in the skies of Claude and the composition of Ruysdael that endeared them

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to him more than mere fidelity to detail. Accordingly he laboured with zest only upon subjects voluntarily undertaken, and to which he felt drawn by a spontaneous attraction; and over these he rarely failed to throw the grace of a fresh and vivid conception. The word "handling" was his aversion, because he saw no evidence of it in nature, and looked upon her loving delineator as working not in a mechanical but in a sympathetic relation. "There is room enough," he says, "for a natural painter. The great vice of the present day is *bravura*—an attempt to do something beyond the truth." Harvest-men were to him more charming than peers; and the rustle of foliage sweeter than the hum of conversaziones.

In the foreground of a picture of a cathedral, described by Leslie, "he introduced a circumstance familiar to all who are in the habit of noticing cattle. With cows there is generally, if not always, one which is called, not very accurately, the master cow, and there is scarcely anything the rest of the herd will venture to do until the master has taken the lead. On the left of the picture this individual is drinking, and turns with surprise and jealousy to another cow approaching the canal lower down for the same purpose; they are of the Suffolk breed, without horns; and it is a curious mark of Constable's fondness for everything connected with his native county, that scarcely an instance can be found of a cow in any of his pictures, be the scene where it may, with horns." "Still life," says his

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friend Fisher, on the receipt of one of his pictures, "is always dull, as there are no associations with it; this is so *deliciously fresh*, that I could not resist it." These epithets reveal the secret of Constable's effects. What truly interests us, derives, from the very enthusiasm with which it is regarded, a vital charm, which gives relish and impressiveness even to description in words, and far more so in lines and colours. The "cool tint of English daylight" refreshes the eye in his best attempts; "bright, not gaudy, but deep and clear." It is curious that the term "healthy" has been applied to Constable's colouring—the very idea we instinctively associate with the real landscape of his country.

A newspaper, describing an exhibition of the Royal Academy, thus speaks of one of his pictures, and it gives, as far as words can, a just notion of his style of Art: "A scene without any prominent features of the grand and beautiful, but with a rich broken foreground sweetly pencilled, and a very pleasing and natural tone of colour throughout the wild, green distance." The inimitable Jack Bannister said of another, that "from it he could feel the wind blowing on his face." Constable was delighted with the pertinacity of a little boy who, in repeating his catechism, would not say otherwise than—"and walk in the *same fields* all the days of my life," he declared "our ideas of happiness are the same." He also recorded his earnest assent to the remark of a friend, that "the whole object and diffi-

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culty of the Art is to *unite imagination with nature.*" In one of his letters, he says: "I can hardly write for looking at the silvery clouds." Speaking of one of his own landscapes, he indulges in a remark, the complacency of which may be readily forgiven—"I have preserved God Almighty's daylight, which is enjoyed by all mankind, excepting only the lovers of old dirty canvas, perished pictures at a thousand guineas each, cart-grease, tar, and snuff of candle."

It is thus obvious that he pursued his Art in a spirit of independence, and with a manly directness of purpose, which neither fashion nor interest for an instant modified. The sentiment which impelled him was the love of nature, and this, like the other love referred to by Shakespere, "lends a precious seeing to the eye." It was not a vague emotion, but a definite attachment; and he possessed the rare moral courage to act it out. This, the biography of artists convinces us is true wisdom. It would have been only the folly of a perverse ambition for Constable to have emulated the old Italian masters and produced saints, Madonnas, and martyrs. The scenery of his native country was not more familiar to his eye than endeared to his heart; and so attentively and fondly had he explored it, that he used to declare he never saw an ugly thing, whose intrinsic homeliness was not relieved by some effect of light, shade or perspective. His delight in nature was, indeed, inexhaustible. He has been quaintly said to have

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known the language of a windmill; and the most common forms of architecture—the most familiar toils of the husbandman—and the ordinary habits of animals, wore significance to his eye, because of the vast and intimate beauty amid which they are visible, and with which they are associated. Simplicity was his great characteristic, giving birth to that truth to himself which involves and secures truth to nature, both in art and in literature. His taste was permanently opposed to the factitious and the conventional, and never swerved in its allegiance to the primal and enduring.

Landscape-painting, in its best significance, is a representation not only of the form and aspects but of the sentiment of nature. If we regard it in its broad relations, it may be said to have a scientific and national value as the authentic image of the features of the universe, modified by climate, vegetation, and history—eminently illustrative to the naturalist and the statesman. There are few departments of Art more suggestive. The camel group and palm-tree of Eastern scenery—the snowy peaks of Alpine mountains—the luxuriant foliage of the tropics—and the ruined arch, shrine, and aloe of Southern Europe, each, in turn, convey to the mind of the spectator hints that imagination easily expands into entire countries. To the patriotic sympathies its appeal is inevitable; and the portfolios of travellers often contain the most satisfactory memorials of their pil-

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grimage. Few, except artists, however, realize the variety of meaning and the characteristic in scenery; and the number who recognize the minor and shifting language of the external world, is still more limited. Yet even the insensible and unobservant during a voyage, and when confined to a particular spot and isolated from society, will sometimes note attentively many successive sunsets, or the effect of the seasons upon a familiar prospect, and thus gradually awaken to that world of vision through which, when more pre-occupied, they move almost unconscious of its ever-changing expression.

The eloquent work of Ruskin on the modern painters, whether its theories are accepted or not, ably unfolds the extent of interest derivable from this subject; but there is one common instinct to the gratification of which it ministers more than any branch of Art—that of local association. A good picture of a birth-place, the scene of early life, of historical incident or poetical association, is invaluable; and this feeling has been greatly deepened by the transition of the Art from graphic imitation to a picturesque reflection of the sentiment of a landscape. Herein lies its poetry. It is this soulful beauty that gives an undying charm to the sunsets of Claude: and has created an epoch in Art by the glorious effects of Turner. Indeed the ideality of the English mind has nowhere asserted itself more successfully than in her school of modern landscape. Morland and Gainsborough set an ex-

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ample of truth and feeling which has been carried onward by such painters as Wilson and Constable. Genuine simplicity—that manly Anglo-Saxon freedom from extravagance and repose upon nature, in such works is as clearly revealed as in the nobler literature and wholesome habits of the nation.

There is a beautiful harmony between the character and pursuit of Constable. His time was given only to art and domestic life—the routine of which knew no variation, except an occasional visit to Sir George Beaumont or Fisher. His capacity to inspire lasting attachment—a quality which seems to be the birthright of genius—is delightfully apparent in his correspondence with the latter friend. "Dear Constable"—he writes, when the artist was in trouble—"you want a staff just now; *lean hard on me.*" The integrity of true affection is also manifest in his intercourse with the object of his early and latest love. The patience, self-respect, and gentleness with which they endured the long and unreasonable opposition to their marriage—the unfailing comfort imparted by their mutual regard, the blending of good sense, principle and sentiment in their relation to each other from first to last—are results only obtainable where generous, affectionate, and intelligent natures coalesce. The painter's love of children, humorous mention of his cat, constant kindness to a poor organist and unfortunate paint-grinder—his longings for home when absent—his delight there in the intervals of

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his toil — his charities, friendliness, and geniality, accord with the sweetness of his taste.

"Whenever I find a man," says Milton, "despising the false estimates of the vulgar, and daring to aspire in sentiment, language, and conduct, to what the highest wisdom in every age has taught us as most excellent, to him I unite myself by a sort of necessary attachment." By such a process Constable mainly rose in Art, and kept the even tenor of his life. The appreciation of his artistic merits was very slow, as is obvious from the number of pictures in his studio at the time of his decease. Contemporary artists criticised oftener than they commended him. His ideas of his Art, as expressed in conversation and in his lectures, were "caviare to the general." His election as an Academician was a deserved honour, but somewhat grudgingly bestowed. His finances were often at the lowest ebb—his domestic cares unceasing: illness frequently weighed down his spirits, and bereavements caused his heart to bleed again and again, especially when his wife followed his parents to the land of shadows. But, through all, he lived in his affections and his art, with rare fidelity and singleness of heart; and his friends, and the memory of the beauty of his pictures, will long reflect his genial, serene, and consistent nature.

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THE FINANCIER:

JAMES LAFITTE.

In the majority of cases large fortunes are gained and preserved through careful attention to details—a habit which is supposed to militate with comprehensive views and liberal sympathies. It is, therefore, common to regard the acquisition of money and elevation of taste and character as essentially incompatible; and this consideration gives peculiar interest and value to the few noble exceptions to a general rule which reveal the sagacious financier as a patriot and philosopher. Prejudice, and the narrow ideas usually cherished by the devotees of trade, have caused the whole subject of money—its acquisition, preservation and use, to be consigned to the domain of necessary evils or the study of the political economist: it is, however, an interest too vital and too inextricably woven into all the relations of modern society, not to have claims upon the most reflective minds, independent of all personal considerations.

The actual theory of an individual in regard to

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money is no ordinary test of character; the degrees of his estimation of it as a means or an end, and as a source of obligation and responsibility, is graduated by the very elements of his nature and, is a significant indication of his tone of mind and range of feeling. In its larger relations—those of a national kind—history proves that finance is a vast political engine intimately connected with the freedom, growth and civil welfare as well as external prosperity of a country. The traveller far removed from his native land, at a period of great financial distress, is made to realize the importance of credit, its moral as well as pecuniary basis, when he hears the character and means of all the prominent bankers in the world freely canvassed in some obscure nook of the earth, only connected perhaps with the civilized world by this very recognition of pecuniary obligation.

It is at such crises, bringing home to his own consciousness the vast and complicated relations of money to civilized life, that the individual becomes aware of the extensive social utility of those principles of financial science to which perhaps, in less hazardous exigencies, he has given but listless attention. The same broad views of the subject are forced upon a nation's mind in the junctures of political existence, and all great revolutions alternate from the battle-field and the cabinet to the treasury—the state of public and private credit being, as it were, a scale that truly suggests the condition of the body politic—like the pulse of a nation's life. Besides its attraction

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as a study of character, therefore, the life of one of the most illustrious of modern financiers, possesses great incidental interest; and its unadorned facts yield the most impressive illustration of the relation of money to society and government.

The vicinity of the Pyrenees and the Bay of Biscay renders Bayonne a favourable site both for inland and foreign trade; and her commerce with Spain on the one side and her lucrative fisheries on the other, as well as the large amount of ship timber annually exported to Brest and other parts of France, amply vindicate her claim to commercial privileges which are still farther secured by the enterprise of the Gascon character. That it is an excellent mercantile school is evident from the proverbial success of her inhabitants elsewhere.

It was from this old city that a youth of twenty, breaking away from his mother's tearful embrace, one night in the year 1787, departed for Paris, with no guarantee of a prosperous experience except that derived from an ingenuous disposition, enthusiasm, ready intelligence and great natural cheerfulness. He became a clerk to the banker M. Perégaux; and soon after, by his own obvious merit, book-keeper, then cashier, and finally the exclusive director and indispensable man of business of the establishment. Such was the origin of James Lafitte's career. The qualities which thus advanced him in private life soon inspired public confidence and gradually led to his honourable and progressive activity in the national

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councils. Financial ability of a high order, combined with noble traits of character, thus identified him with the best interests of his country, and enrolled his name among her most efficient and illustrious citizens. One of ten children, his first object was to provide for his family, which he did with characteristic generosity. In 1809 the son of the poor carpenter of Bayonne was the president of the Chamber of Commerce, regent of the Bank, and master of a princely fortune. Thenceforth we trace his agency, more or less distinctly, in the wonderful series of events that succeeded the first revolution; now providing funds for a royal exile, now coming to the rescue of a bankrupt nation, and again lying wounded on his sofa, advising, ordering, and invoking the chief actors in the events of the three days in July,—his court-yard a barrack and his saloon an impromtu cabinet, where a provisional goverment was organised and Louis Philippe proclaimed.

It was standing between Lafitte and Lafayette that the new king first ventured to show himself to the people. For many years the patriot-broker was the centre of a gifted society, the arbiter of pecuniary affairs, the coadjutor of monarchs and men of genius, of the working classes and political leaders. Surrounded by luxury, he never became indolent; with absorbing duties, he atoned by study for a neglected education; the possessor of immense wealth, he never forgot the responsibility it involved; a zealous partisan, and of so conciliatory a temper as to have the reputa-

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tion of caprice in opinion, he preserved unbroken a moral consistency that won universal respect.

To this special insight of a financier, Lafitte added genuine public spirit; he fully realized the social claims incident to his wealth and financial knowledge; and accordingly never hesitated to sacrifice personal interest to the general welfare whenever circumstances rendered it wise and benevolent so to act. When governor of the Bank of France, he relinquished his salary of a hundred thousand francs in its favour on account of the poverty of the institution; in 1814, when the directors assembled, after the entrance of the foe into Paris, to raise funds, he proposed a national subscription and munificently headed the list. When the Allies were at the gates of the city, he steadily refused to endanger the credit of the bank by a forced loan: and to avert the horrors of civil war, placed two millions of his own property in the hands of the Minister of Finance. After the events of those three days, he resigned his coffers to the provisional government: his hotel was the rendezvous of the chief actors, his party installed Lafayette at the head of the troops, and it was he that sent word to the Duke of Orleans to choose between a crown and a passport, and subsequently caused him to be proclaimed.

Thus Lafitte thrice gave a safe direction to the chaotic elements of revolution, and came bravely and successfully to the rescue of his country in great emergencies. Nor was his action in behalf of individuals less noble and

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prompt. When Louis XVIII, was exiled, he sent the royal fugitives four millions of francs; when the Duke of Orleans offered large though doubtful securities to various commercial houses in vain, Lafitte accepted them at par value, uncertain as they were. When Napoleon departed for St. Helena, Lafitte became the repository of the remainder of his fortune; when General Foy experienced a reverse of fortune and imprudently sought relief in stock speculations, the generous banker confidentially arranged with his broker to enrich the brave and proud officer, and when he died, subscribed a hundred thousand francs for the benefit of his family. These are but casual instances of his private liberality. It was a habit as well as principle with him to afford pecuniary relief whenever and wherever real misfortune existed, to cherish by the same means industry, letters, art, and benevolent institutions, with a judgment and delicacy that infinitely endeared his gifts. It is not surprising that both people and rulers were, at times, impelled by grateful sympathy to recognise the noble spirit of such a financier;—that the Emperor Alexander placed a guard at his door when his liberty was threatened by the invaders;—that Napoleon expressed his confidence by saying, as he left the remnant of his fortune in his hands, "I know you did not like my government, but I know you are an honest man;" and that France herself, when his own fortune was wrecked by his devotion to the bank and the country—was moved at

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the remembrance of his sacrifices, would not permit the first asylum of the revolution to be sold, and by a national subscription redeemed it for Lafitte.

It is however to be regretted that he ever interested himself actively in politics, except as they were directly related to his peculiar sphere. When called upon to bring financial means to the aid of government or people in her exigencies of civil life, we have seen his exemplary wisdom, integrity, and generous spirit; when he addressed the Chambers upon any question of debt, credit, loans, or currency, his superior intelligence and practical genius at once won respectful attention; his lucid and able reports, while governor of the bank, indicate his accurate knowledge of the principles of public credit; the remarkable speeches in which he revealed a project for resuscitating the nation's treasury,—the originality of his ideas, his colloquial eloquence, and the manner in which he made a dry subject, and even figures themselves interesting and comprehensive—amply prove his remarkable adaptation to the domain of social economy and political action he illustrated. Appointed by the King in 1816 as one of the Committee of Finance, with the Duke of Richelieu at its head, he contested the system of forced loans as identical with bankruptcy. In 1836 he demanded the reimbursements of the five per cents. His theory was founded essentially on the conviction that the way to diminish the burdens of the people is to diminish the expenses of the State.

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Had Lafitte thus strictly confined himself to the subject of which he was master, it is probable he would have escaped, in a great degree, the blind prejudice of his opponents. As it was, however, his career as a deputy to the view of an impartial spectator, reflects honour upon his character. Here, as in private life, he was eminently distinguished by moral courage. On one occasion he boldly proposed the impeachment of ministers; during the hundred days he was one of the intrepid minority that sought to preserve France from a second invasion; in opposing the system of forced loans his noble hardihood induced the King to invest him with the legion of honour: "I have," he said to the Duke of Richelieu, his most formidable antagonist on this occasion, "bound myself to speak my mind; if the plan I propose is salutary, it is for the king to decide whether he will sacrifice the Chambers to France and the country to the Chambers."

On the celebrated 28th of July, accompanied by his friends, he traversed the scene of hostilities to the Carousel—the quarters of Marshal Marmont, and adjured him to put a stop to the carnage; "military honour," said the commander of Paris, consists in obedience; "civil honour," replied the brave deputy, "consists in not slaughtering the citizens to destroy the Constitution." At the funeral of Manuel he arrested with his eloquence the outbreak between the military and the people. He was in the front rank of the defenders of the charter, the staunch advocate of

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the freedom of the press; and when he saw the revolution of July approaching, effectually and at great personal risk, strove to make it as useful and bloodless as the nature of things would permit. "My conscience," he said, "is without reproach. I founded, it is true, a new dynasty, but I found something in it legitimate. Posterity will judge me. I hope the loyalty of my intentions will find me grace in the eyes of history. I never deceived any one. My principles never changed. I believed in 1830 that France could only be republican through monarchy. I was wrong, and I repent with all my heart." For half a century he defended the rights of the people, and never ceased to preach moderation, but "a moderation compatible with liberty and national honour."

In the war of opinion and the strife of party, Lafitte suffered the inevitable caprices of popular favour; even his opponents, however, considered what they deemed his faults, to arise from the strength of his affections rather than the perversion of his will: his official life ruined his private fortunes; and the bitterness of his disappointment at the apparent inefficacy of the revolution in which he had taken so prominent a part may be inferred from the memorable fact that he ascended the tribune, and with much solemnity, asked pardon of heaven, for having contributed to its success. He seems at last to have become thoroughly aware of the limits of his natural vocation, and expressed himself as content when free once more from

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the trammels of state, he began to retrieve his fortunes as a banker.

The views of Lafitte, however, on all subjects which he investigated, were remarkable for sound reason and moderation. He was no fanatic in politics, and understood the character of his nation. Louis XVI., he thought, aimed at a moral impossibility in attempting to retain all his prerogatives, without which the eclat of his office would be lost, while he knew the complaints of his people to be just; to the vacillation incident to this double view of the case and the consequent indecision of a naturally good heart, he ascribed his course — which abased royalty while making sincere concessions: he believed, too, that the monarch owed his downfall more to injudicious friends than real enemies. The Girondists, he considered, tried the fatal experiment of attempting to reconcile people and court, and were too timid for the first and too advanced for the last; he regarded the irresolution of Lafayette as the flaw in his excellent nature; Danton, Robespierre, and Marat, he viewed as victims of the *fièvre revolutionnaire*, and, therefore, not to be judged in the same manner as men in a healthful condition. Indeed, he declared that no one could safely predict his own conduct under the influence of great political excitement. "I have," he said, "made the sad experiment; it is best not to enter the vortex; if you do you are borne on blindfolded." He always insisted that the great results of the French

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Revolution could have been attained by less terrible means. He recognized fully the reforms of Napoleon, and with the acumen of a political economist, watched the growing prosperity of the nation; but none the less lamented the decadence of freedom with the grief of a patriot; he recoiled from the duplicity of the Emperor and grieved at the subserviency of the Senate. What most surprised Lafitte in Bonaparte, was his fortune; and he deemed his fatal error—the attempt to impose on France a continental system, wholly incompatible with the age: in a word, he honoured Napoleon as a soldier, and despised him as a ruler. The office of the press he seems to have thoroughly appreciated, "*j'ai toujours pensé*," he says, "*que la presse est dans un état, l'unique moyen de retenir le pouvoir dans les bornes de la moderation et de l'empêcher de se livrer a l'arbitraire.*"

Although, when elected to the Chamber of Deputies, Lafitte immediately took his place on the benches of the opposition, and subsequently attained the presidency of the cabinet, and in 1817 was the only name deposited in the urns of twenty sections of the electoral college by supporting the reduction of the Rents and the creation of the Three per Cents, he alienated many of his party. Indeed, such was his political eclecticism, that a democratic writer says "he lost his popularity by his monarchical affections"—alluding to his personal attachments to members of the royal family; and a monarchist attributes it to his democratic

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attachments—thus justifying the inference of his biographer—that he was "too much a man of heart to be a statesman." In the sphere of his individual ambition, however—in his financial opinions and career, as well as in the tone of his character, Lafitte was remarkably consistent; — sagacious, upright, benevolent, and patriotic. He completely refuted the base charge suggested by partisan animosity — of having sold his vote to the minister; and whatever popular favour he may have lost as the member of a faction, he amply regained as a man. This is evident from the universal sympathy awakened by his loss of fortune, and the confidence and gratitude with which the people rallied to his call when he established his famous *Caisse d'escompte*, now the memorial of his useful and honourable career. By means of this institution, the poorest artisan has a safe and profitable investment for his earnings.

In 1837, having thus settled his affairs and re-established his credit, he thus addressed the shareholders: "It is not without emotion that I find myself restored to these labours, and about to crown, with an undertaking worthy of my best efforts, a career in which I have perhaps done some good. I forget many past mishaps and all the bitterness of political life, which promised nothing to my ambition, and the burden of which I only accepted from devotion to my country. The future had compensation in reserve for me; and the 2nd of October, 1837—the day on which I resume my

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business, consoles me for the 19th of January, 1831, —the day on which I left it." Thus opening a credit to the humbler branches of industry, Lafitte rescued many a victim from the extortions of the usurer.

The financial services of Lafitte in France vividly recall those of Robert Morris in America. At the commencement of the American Revolution he was more extensively engaged in commerce than any of his fellow-citizens, and was one of the first Philadelphians irretrievably to commit himself in behalf of the colonies at a great pecuniary sacrifice—thus inspiring the same unbounded confidence in his patriotism which his integrity and wisdom had long before gained for him as a man of business. He was on every committee of ways and means appointed by the legislature of his native State, and from the outbreak of hostilities, devoted all the force of his talents, the influence of his name,—his credit and fortune to his country; and these seldom failed in the hour of need. When his official resources were inadequate, he pledged his individual credit. Like Lafitte, he was exposed to misrepresentation, and, like him, triumphed over calumny. All the requisite means for Washington's expedition against Cornwallis were furnished by him; and his own notes to the amount of four hundred thousand dollars thus fearlessly given, were all finally paid. While invested, as he long was with the entire provision, control, and expenditure of

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the public finances, the history of his difficulties and expedients would fill a volume. When the imminent danger that originally induced him to accept this responsible office had passed away, he gladly resigned.

His resemblance to Lafitte was increased by a natural urbanity, vigour of action, broad views, rigid justice, strict method, and also by the eventual loss of his own fortune and the establishment of an excellent system of finance. He founded the Bank of America, the first institution of the kind in that country—upon principles the utility of which time has fully proved. In patriotic zeal and in respect of his illustrious contemporaries, he also offers a parallel to the renowned French banker; he was the friend of Washington and justly regarded as "the soul of the financial concerns" of the nation. "No one," it has been said, "parted more freely with his money for public or private purposes of a meritorious nature." When Hamilton became Secretary of the Treasury, no statistics of the country had appeared, her resources were only surmised, and after holding the office for five years, he left it at an unprecedented height of reputation. By these two acute and zealous patriots the foundation of American prosperity was laid: and the identity of their opinions with those of Lafitte is remarkable. "The whole business of finance," they thought, "was comprised in two short but comprehensive sentences. It is to raise the public revenue by such modes as may be most easy and most equal to

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the people, and to expend it in the most frugal, fair, and honest manner."

The personal tastes of James Lafitte were characterized by the same moderate tone. He loved elegance, and surrounded himself with all those brilliant resources that wealth so abundantly supplies in the French metropolis; but they did not enervate or bewilder his mind; he continued his daily toil with unremitted zeal; casting aside, however, with the greatest facility the severe concentration of the financier, to mingle, with the *abandon* of the joyous south, at his own splendid fêtes, with the brave, the wise, and the lovely. Even his literary predilections were characteristic; he ignored the romantic and loved the classic writers of his country, while the *bonhommie* and patriotism of Beranger made him a favourite guest at his reunions, and he knew Molière by heart. His first discourse as deputy made a great impression, both on account of its style and ideas. It is curious that the sensation, if we may so call it, of wealth, is so independent of its possession. Lafitte declared that he never felt himself rich except when his appointments, under Perregaux, reached the sum of three thousand francs;—an indirect but striking proof of his consciousness of the relations to society incident to fortune. His credulous faith in the integrity of others presents a striking contrast to his sagacious insight as regards affairs. When the Duke of Orleans said to him, "What shall I do for you when I am king?"

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his reply was—"Make me your fool that I may tell you the truth;" yet he entertained such implicit confidence in the promises of the royal candidate, that he received his embrace upon his accession, with fraternal trust. Calm, serene, industrious as a financier, generous and honest as a man, gay and kindly as a companion, after forty years of riches and honour Lafitte found himself poor and unpopular, and perhaps no portion of his career is more suggestive of energy of character and elasticity of temper than the last epoch wherein he retrieved both his fortune and his glory.

The power of money, thus illustrated, as a means of political and social influence, is not less obvious in ordinary experience. Recall the scene of morbid excitement and its infinite probable consequences, which a single midnight hour offers at Frascati's,—"the hard-eyed lender and the pale lendee," visible on the Exchange;—the serene unity of life achieved by the plilosopher satisfied with the freedom from care incident to a mere competency when attended by intellectual resources;—the "weary hours" of the millionaire;—the exalted aspect of human nature in the person of the man of fortune, whose means are rendered absolutely subservient to taste and philanthropy;—the comfort of households upheld by honest industry;—the sublime results of genius when exempted from want and the baffled spirit of the persecuted debtor; the absorption of time, intellect, and feeling in sordid pursuits; let the imagination follow to their ultimate

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issues the various incidental fruits of these several conditions upon the individual and society, and we have a glimpse of the vast agencies involved in the use and abuse of money.

From the Bureaux du Monte de Pieté to the halls of a National Bank, from the luxurious saloon to the squalid hovel, from the dashing spendthrift to the wretched miser—through all the diagnoses of usury and beneficence, we can trace the fluctuations of human passions and the assertion of human character in their most vital development. Accordingly it is impossible to over-estimate the value of wisdom, integrity, and kindness in pecuniary affairs: a high example in this regard is of boundless practical worth; and there is no social interest so universal and significant as that which relates to the acquisition, distribution, and maintenance of wealth: the morals and science of finance, rightly understood, embrace the principals of all ethics.

The "unfortunate compliances" which marred the unity of his political life;—the indifference that settles on the public mind in regard to a fallen minister;—the bitterness of partisan hostility and the capricious alienation of popular favour—were all forgotten in tearful and affectionate memories, when on the night of the 26th of May, 1843, it was announced, in Paris, that Lafitte was no more. He died as he had lived, amid noble and generous thoughts, affectionate ministrations, calm resolutions, and holy sentiments. The immense procession that followed to Père la Chaise and

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the sad group of brilliant statesmen, authors, and military officers, of poor and grateful recipients of his bounty, of loyal citizens and intimate friends, that saw his remains deposited in the tomb prepared for them between those of Foy and Manuel, evidenced the ultimate appreciation of his character, which became more eloquently manifest in the tributes which Arago and the leading public men of the day spontaneously offered to his memory.

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THE YOUTHFUL HERO:

THEODORE KÖRNER.

On the high road near the village of Wobbelin there stands, beneath an oak tree, the Iron Monument of Theodore Körner. The material of which it is constructed, the simplicity of its design, the tree which overshadows it and its isolated yet accessible position, would naturally induce an observant traveller to examine and a contemplative one to muse beside it; but how infinitely is the casual interest thus awakened, enhanced when we recall the brief but thrilling history of him in whose remembrance it was erected; and realize how entirely the lineaments of his character accord with the solemn beauty of his grave! There is often as much room for conjecture in regard to the absolute endowments of the hero as of the poet: the fame of both is only settled by time; posterity not unfrequently reverses the original decree; and the frank soldier and candid bard sometimes dispel the charming illusions they have originated, by admitting

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certain facts of consciousness: thus courage and inspiration are as fallacious when judged by mere appearance, as mock superficial qualities; accident, luck, animal excitement, vanity and desperation may be the only claim of the so-called hero to the title; and imitation, art and tact form the sole attributes of him whom the world of to-day denominate a poet. It is rare, indeed, for these noblest of human distinctions to be thoroughly vindicated by the same individual during his life;—for genuine poetic gifts to be illustrated by their sensible effects upon the popular mind, and genuine heroism to be indicated clearly in the expressed purpose, the thoughtful resolve and then realized by entire self-devotion and voluntary martyrdom. Such a course seems to include all the elements of the heroic character and leave not the faint shadow of a doubt of a grand moral reality.

There is a courage of temperament which man shares with the inferior animals—that which leads the stag to stand at bay, the steed to rush into battle, and the mastiff and game-cock to lose the sense of safety in the vindictiveness of a contest: there is a courage of the imagination born of vision of glory, the zest of adventure and the love of excitement; and there is a courage of the will—the calm resolve of valour inspired by patriotism or duty, and thoughtfully adopted after mature reflection. In proportion to the danger incurred, the personal advantage relinquished, and the consistency of its aim, is this latter species of courage

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to be estimated. It is this which essentially constitutes the hero; it is an element of character, not an impulse of feeling; it is the product of the soul, not of mere physical superiority; and exalts humanity by intensifying her active powers with the concentration of intelligent moral purpose.

Theodore Körner thus more completely realized this ideal of the youthful hero than any character of modern times; or rather left behind him the most authentic evidence and beautiful memorials of its reality: for without reference to the mere facts of his life, we have the two most impressive revelations of his nature—the written thought and the noble deed, the sentiment calmly yet earnestly expressed and its practical embodiment: the motive and the deed to attest the hero,—feeling shaping itself into deliberate action; we have successively the man, the poet, the soldier and the martyr; and it is this unity of development that renders Körner's career almost unique. That the views he adopted were not the offspring of a heated imagination,—that the sentiments he professed arose from a deeper source than the hot blood of youth, that he was perfectly conscious of all he risked, and quite aware of the sacrifice he offered, is apparent from his literary productions, his conversation, letters, and consistent behaviour. His education was singularly adapted to develope, at once, mental energy and the gentlest affections; it encouraged physical strength and aptitude and the highest moral aspiration; and

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hence he was capable of estimating for himself both the claims of duty and the claims of pleasure. The very atmosphere of his childhood was intellectual; his father, although ostensibly devoted to jurisprudence, was a man of the warmest literary sympathies and the highest culture;—while his mother was the daughter of an artist; Schiller and Goëthe were their intimate friends; the former wrote Don Carlos in the elder Körner's house; and not the least pleasing chapters in the lives of both authors are those which record anecdotes of this early intercourse and the correspondence to which it led.

Young Körner's first recollections are associated with this cottage in a vineyard—endeared to the three illustrious friends. Körner's infancy was feeble, and he was, therefore, encouraged to practice manly exercises, in which he soon became an adept, having few equals, among his companions, in fencing and swimming; he was a most graceful equestrian and dancer, and excelled in gymnastic feats. To this admirable physical training so essential to the martial hero, were added the accomplishments of musician and draughtsman. This early instruction was derived altogether from private tuition; habitual exposure to the open air, and the influence of nature as well as the highest social intercourse, combined to invigorate and refine the capabilities of the soul. But judicious and comprehensive as was his education, it only accounts in part for the nobler bias of his character. He very soon manifested

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the most decided tastes and aims, and the instinctive, far more than the acquired, moulded his destiny: strength of mind and firmness of purpose, tenderness of heart and loyal attachments, soon gave promise of a characteristic life; while an appreciation of science and a facility of versification were equally obvious mental distinctions, the one giving vent to his enthusiasm and sentiment, and the other discipline and scope to his intellect.

Doubtless this need of an active life on the one hand and mental exercise on the other, induced his first choice of a profession, which was that of mining: and his mineralogical and chemical studies were formed under Warner, at Freyburg, where Humboldt first entered upon his illustrious career. At noon the companionship of his sister and her friends, called out his gentlest sympathies and delicate tastes, while that of his father's literary coteries elicited his noblest intelligence; summer excursions made him familiar with the most beautiful scenery of his country; and thus we have, as it were, a complete, though informal, system of life amply fitted to educate a poet and hero. It is remarkable that singular vivacity of temperament and facility of adaptation alternated, under these influences, with a solemn earnestness of character; in his boyhood and first youth, Körner was lively but never frivolous; he engaged with similar alacrity in the most sportive and the most severe occupations, soon became a social favourite, and yet retained the

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nature of a contemplative enthusiast. His dislike of the French, the profound melancholy induced by the loss of an intimate friend who was drowned, and a quick sense of honour, are traits vividly remembered by his earliest associates.

His first religious pieces seem to have been inspired during a foot excursion amid the scenery of Silesia. At the Berlin academy, whither he was sent after some years of varied teaching at home, Körner was engaged in a duel; and the impetuosity of his nature, combined with the strongest poetical tendencies, led his father to assent to his removing to Vienna, where he was cordially received by William Humboldt and Schlegel. His rashness of spirit having become subdued by a protracted fever, and his domestic sympathies revived from a pleasant sojourn with his family at Carlsbad, he exchanged college for metropolitan life, in a state of mind peculiarly fitted to render it both useful and happy. His cheerful temper, fine personal appearance, poetical reputation and good birth, gave him every advantage at the outset of his brief yet brilliant career at the capital; but these only served him as the initiative steps of fame; and after supporting himself for some months by means of his scientific attainments, he began to write for the stage. He was not less fortunate in the kind of discipline to which his boyhood was subjected; this was voluntary;—he was never thwarted; his reason, his honour and his tastes were appealed to, and his will thus conciliated. To the absence of fear

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in youth we ascribe the manly freedom of his nature; the only authority claimed over him was that of love; his parents were companions not less than guides. They respected his idiosyncrasies, and only sought to keep him in true relations with nature, humanity and God. Hence his faults were always those of excess, never of calculation; he was sometimes rash, but knew not a mean instinct; and the freshness and energy of his soul were preserved intact: education only ripened and called out original endowments.

The spirit of enjoyment is more active at Vienna than in any city of Germany. If its libraries, museums, and galleries of art give it intellectual character, its Prater thronged with recreating groups, including every class from the emperor to the humblest citizens, and boasting the richest *corso* in Europe, the prevalence of music as a pastime, the number of theatres and the social taste of the people, render Vienna the centre of genial and varied life; while the devotees of art or letters often pursue their respective object at Leipsic or Frankfort with isolated enthusiasm and earnest individuality, the tendency of the social atmosphere and prosperous activity at Vienna, is to make the artist or the man of letters an efficient and sympathetic intelligence inspired by and giving impulse to the circles of fashion, taste and conviviality. There lived Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven; and if their deeper revelations were born in the solitude of their own consciousness and the intensity of thoughtful emotion, doubtless the zest of life and the good of

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human interest around them yielded some of the mystic threads which link harmonies to the universal heart. Into this enjoyable work Körner brought not only his own rare endowments of mind and character, but the *prestige* of good conversation and attractive manners. To feel the high and pleasurable excitement of writing successfully for the stage at this period, and in such a metropolis as Vienna, we must remember that the stage was the central point of interest to all classes, the theme of enlightened criticism, the object of tasteful appreciation; those who illustrated its power, in any department, with real genius, were sure not only of professional rewards but of social estimation; the theatre was peculiarly a national institution and a fashionable and literary nucleus endeared by habit, association and sympathy to the most cultivated and respected, as well as the pleasure-loving, citizens. The seeds of thought and sentiment in the mind of young Körner seemed to flower, all at once, in the encouraging sphere, and amid the inviting intercourse here opened to him.

His first efforts were light two-act pieces written in Alexandrines, of which the "Bride" and the "Green Domino" had such success that he began soon to meditate a more elaborate and finished production. At this era his time passed in a delightful alternation of study and society; idolized in the latter, he brought to the former all the ardent and noble feeling and facility of expression which characterized his nature;

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and while the one elicited his sportive and companionable graces, the other gave impulse to the more intense and thoughtful moods of his soul. An immediate and intelligent appreciation, like that which awaits the successful dramatic author in Germany, and the social privileges and sympathy awarded him in Vienna, naturally excited the enthusiasm of Körner, and when he was appointed poet to the theatre, his fortune and position were truly eminent; but ambition was only a secondary inspiration, for two sentiments glowed in his heart and gave the utmost eloquence to his expression; he was a genuine patriot and lover; and at this brilliant epoch, the companionship of his betrothed, the ardent devotion of his friends, and the new-born spirit of liberty that stirred the breasts of his countrymen, all united to quicken and evoke his genius. Time has proved that its most legitimate offspring was lyrical poetry; the directness, harmony, and spontaneous origin of this kind of verse accorded with the frank earnestness of his character, and more faithfully mirrored his inward life than the elaborate and studied drama. Yet one remarkable triumph in the latter style he soon achieved.

The tragedy of Zriny, whatever may be its imperfections as a work of art, is memorable as the composition of a youth and as the deliberate record of his most profound sentiments. The period of this play is 1566, and the action is first at Belgrade and then in and before the Hungarian fortress of

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Sigeth, which is heroically defended by Nicholas Von Irving, against Soliman; Lorenzo Juranitsch, the former's lieutenant, is the betrothed of his daughter, whose character as well as that of her mother are delineated with a grace and truth worthy of a poet's discriminating estimate of woman. The character of Lorenzo Juranitsch is doubtless Körner's own ideal; and the plot of the drama, in a striking manner typifies his destiny. Indeed the most emphatic passages of the tragedy are identical with the views, feelings, and purposes he cherished, as uttered in familiar conversation and letters. In a literary point of view, the distinct characterization, the fine contrast between the oriental scenes and those in the Hungarian fortress; the powerful and consistent tone of self-devotion maintained by Zriny and his followers, the intense co-existence of love and duty,—are traits so happily manifest as to have seized at once on the popular feeling.

The play may be justly considered as an exposition of heroism, and what gives it a permanent interest, is the fact that it embodies the habitual state of mind, foreshadows the sacrifice and glows with the very soul of the author: it also not inadequately represents the prevalent sentiment of Germany, at the period. The flames of Moscow had kindled the dormant valour of northern Europe; deep indignation against her conqueror now found vent in action; and the love of country was thoroughly awakened; a spirit of self-

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consecration and a holy as well as martial zeal, such as the poet so well describes as nerving the Hungarian patriots of the tragedy, pervaded all hearts; so that "Zriny" may be regarded as vividly reflecting not only the individual consciousness of the poet but the public sentiment of his country. An impressive proof of the harmony between Körner's expressed and acted sentiments, between his character and writings, is the coincidence in tone and feeling of the letter he addressed his father after his valorous resolve and some expressions that fall from the chief actors in "Zriny:"

"I would depart but as a hero should,
In the full splendour of my boldest love."

"What is there for us higher in this world
That's left untasted in our hallow'd wishes?
Can life afford a moment of more bliss?
Here happiness is transient as the day,
On high eternal as the love of God."

"For as with other slaves 'tis nature's law,
The vital air is the demand of life,
So, maiden, is his honour to a man."

"For nothing is too precious for our country."

"Rash! nay, I am not so—
Yet am I venturous and bold for love,
And all enthusiast for my fatherland."

"That I devote myself to death were little—
My life I oft have ventured in the hazard,
But that I do so, 'mid such joy and pleasure,
'Mid happiness and highest earthly bliss,
This is the struggle, this deserve the prize—
My country may be proud of such an offering."

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"I will clasp
The form of death with arms of youthful love,
And bravely press it to my youthful breast."

"For fate may shatter the heroic breast,
But it can awe not the heroic will;
The worm may creep, ignobly, to its rest,—
The noble mind must fight and triumph still."

"O do not harshly chide with fate, my daughter,
But rather trust its kind paternal favour,
Which hath permitted us by this ordeal
To prove, like gold, our purity of heart."

"*Vienna, March* 10, 1813.

"DEAREST FATHER,

"I write to you respecting an event which I feel assured will neither surprise nor shock you. I lately gave you a hint of my purpose, which has now arrived at maturity. Germany rises; the Prussian eagle, by the beating of her mighty wings, awakes in all true hearts the great hope of German freedom. My poetic art sympathizes for my country; let me prove myself her worthy son! Yes, dearest father, I will join the army, will cheerfully throw aside the happy, joyous life in which I have here enjoyed, in order, with my blood to assist in the deliverance of my country. Call it not impetuosity, levity, rashness. Two years since, it is true, I should have termed it thus myself; but now that I know what happiness can ripen for me in this life; now that the star of fortune sheds on me its most cheering influence, now is it, by heaven, a sacred feeling which inspires me, a conviction that no sacrifice can be too great to insure our country's freedom. Possibly your

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fond paternal heart may say, 'Theodore is meant for better things; in another field he might have accomplished objects more worthy and important, he owes as yet a weighty obligation to mankind.' But father, my conviction is, that for the death-offering for the freedom and honour of our country, no one is too good; though many are too base. If the Almighty have, indeed, inspired me with a more than common mind, which has been taught and formed by thy care and affection, where is the moment when I can better exert it than now? A great age requires great souls, and I feel that I may prove a rock amid this concussion of the nations. I must forth and oppose my daring breast to the waves of the storm.

"Shall I be content to celebrate in poetry the success of my brethren while they fight and conquer? Shall I write entertainments for the comic theatre, when I feel within me the courage and the strength to take part in the great and serious drama of life? I am aware that you will suffer much—my mother too will weep! May God be her comfort; I cannot spare you this trial. I have ever deemed myself the favourite of fortune; she will not forsake me now. That I simply venture my life is but of little import; but that I offer it, crowned as it is, with all the flowery wreaths of love, of friendship—that I cast away the sweet sensation which lived in the conviction that I should never cause you inquietude or sorrow, this is, indeed, a sacrifice which can only be opposed to

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such a prize—our country's freedom. Either on Saturday or Monday I depart, probably accompanied by friends, or possibly H. may despatch me as a courier. At Breslau, my place of destination, I meet the free sons of Prussia, who have enthusiastically collected there, under the banner of their king. I have scarcely decided, as yet, whether I join the cavalry or infantry; this may depend upon the sum of money which may be at my disposal. As to my present appointment here, I know, as yet, nothing certain; possibly the Prince will give me leave of absence, if not there is no seniority in art, and should I return to Vienna, I have the assurance of Count Palfy that still greater advantage of a pecuniary nature await. Antonia has, on this occasion, proved the great, the noble character of her soul. She weeps, it is true, but the termination of the campaign will dry her tears. My mother must forgive me the tears I cause her; whoever loves me will not censure me; and you, father, will find me worthy of you.

"THY THEODORE."

At the very outset of their march, after joining his regiment, they bivouacked in a graveyard; one of the mounds was his pillow, and over another his horse stumbled—and it was regarded by the superstitious observers as ominous. When his sister, who was possessed of much artistic skill, and whose grief for his loss wore away her life, was painting him,

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she suddenly wept—declaring that she saw his head bleeding. He wrote to a friend on the eve of his departure, "if I shall never again be in Meadowst, perhaps I shall soon be on the green, and quite peaceful, quite still!" Indeed, even the most thoughtless of the students who, with all the ardour of youth, threw themselves into the impending struggle—were aware of the truth of Körner's declaration, "every second man of us must die." With him this self-devotion was no sudden fit of martial enthusiasm, but the cherished purpose of years; many allusions in his letters and familiar talk afterwards became clear to his friends. He had felt deeply the misfortunes of his country and pondered on the duty of a citizen, until it was his firm resolve to embrace the first occasion to fight, and if needful, to die for his native land. The summons came when the goblet of life sparkled to the brim, when his mind and heart—his affections and his intellect were thoroughly and genially absorbed; yet he hesitated not a moment, but enrolled himself in Zutzow's corps.

Few episodes in literary history, or rather in the biography of genius, have a more complete and harmonious moral beauty than the whole life of Theodore Körner: there is no wonderful precocity suddenly eclipsed by decay; no *finale* of insanity turning the sweetest melody into horrible discord; no sad compromise between the dreams of youth and the calculations of interest; all is sustained, noble and con-

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sistent:—a childhood enriched with high acquisitions and refined by domestic love;—a youth developed with freedom in an atmosphere of truth; genuine relations with nature and humanity; cheerfulness, intelligence, fortitude and self-devotion; a unity of being that presents a remarkable contrast to the fragmentary, baffled, and too often, incongruous experience of the gifted and the brave. It is affecting, and, at the same time, sublime to recall the happy life of the young poet at Vienna,—environed by the delights of social and literary fame, the cordialities of hospitality, the consolations of friendship, the sweet communion of love, and then behold it, suddenly yet calmly exchanged for hardship, peril and death. Amid the pleasurable excitements of the gay capital, instead of being enervated he was nerved.

It was his custom to retire to the neighbouring village of Doblinger to write. "I always work in the garden," he says, "where I am now writing this letter. A thicket of chestnut trees spreads its cooling shade around me, and my guitar, which hangs behind me on the next tree, employs me in those moments when I cease to write." Antonia, his betrothed, appears to have united the most charming domestic feelings with that heroic spirit that endeared her to her lover. He used to visit her after his morning's labour, quit her presence to dine with Humboldt, or some other genial *savan*, pass the evening either at a party or the theatre, and return home to prosecute his literary

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task, his correspondence or his studies. Love and art exclusively reigned in his soul. Yet in accordance with that law by which the reaction of enthusiasm is inevitable melancholy, Korner often turned from the external sunshine of his lot to realize a gloom within. He had a distinct presentiment of early death, although with characteristic heroism it seldom found other than playful expression. When he was digging the foundation of a temporary hut, his comrade said to him, "You dig like a grave-digger;" and he replied, "We ought to practise the trade, for we shall doubtless have to render, each for the other, that labour of love."

These noble volunteers, comprising the flower of the German youth, were consecrated to the high office they had espoused, at the village church of Breslau; and the muse of their gallant comrade gave utterance to their religious zeal as well as to their patriotic sentiment. The popularity and influence of his martial songs had already endeared his name not only to this chosen band, but to all his brave countrymen; at leisure intervals he wrote other lyrics suggested by the exigencies or feelings of the moment, and selected appropriate melodies that soon winged them, like seeds of valour, throughout the land. He made a final visit to his family at Dresden, before the regiment departed; and we next hear of him thus anticipating a premature death, after the battle of Darmeburg:

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FAREWELL TO LIFE.

Written in the night of the seventeenth and eighteenth of June, as I lay severely wounded and helpless in a wood, expecting to die.

My deep wound burns—my pale lips quake in death—
I feel my fainting heart resign its strife,
And reaching now the limit of my life,
Lord, to thy will I yield my parting breath.

Yet many a dream hath charm'd my youthful eye:
And must life's fairy visions all depart?
Oh, surely no! for all that fired my heart
To rapture here, shall live with me on high.

And that fair form that won my earliest vow,
That my young spirit prized all else above,
And now adored as freedom, now as love,
Stands in seraphic guise, before me now;

And as my fading senses fade away,
It beckons me, on high, to realms of endless day!

Few heroic lyrics exhibit a more genuine spirit than the "Sword Song," and "Lützow's Wild Chase." The former was written on the eve of the engagement in which he fell; he was sending it to a friend, when the signal of attack was made, and it was found in his pocket-book after his death. The tirrailleurs of the enemy fired from a dense grove; a ball passed through the neck of Körner's horse, entered his spine, and he instantly expired; so immediate was the cessation of life, that the expression of his countenance remained unchanged when the body was carried off the field; one of his heart-stricken friends cried, "Let us follow Körner," and they rushed upon the ambushed enemy with desperate valour. Adored by his companions in

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arms, for his delightful social qualities as well as for his transcendant gifts and peerless courage, with silent grief they dug his grave beneath a majestic oak by the road-side, and carved his name on its trunk. With this noble tree the memory of Körner is indissolubly associated; as indigenous to and characteristic of his country, it possessed for him a singular charm; and in the luxuriance of its summer foliage, shaken off so bravely to meet the winter gale, it is an apt symbol of the young hero cheerfully throwing aside the prosperous crown that decked his brow, to war for liberty. One of his pieces derives a melancholy interest from the subject, that deepens its intrinsic pathos:

THE OAKS.

'Tis evening: all is hush'd and still,
The sun sets bright in ruddy sheen;
As here I sit, to muse at will
Beneath these oaks' umbrageous screen;
While wand'ring thoughts my fancy fill
With dreams of life when fresh and green,
And visions of the olden time
Revive in all their pomp sublime.

While time hath called the brave away,
And swept the lovely to the tomb,
As yonder bright but fading ray
Is quench'd amid the twilight gloom:
Yet ye are kept from all decay,
For still unhurt and fresh ye bloom,
And seem to tell in whispering breath,
That greatness still survives in death!

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And ye survive!—'mid change severe,
Each aged stem but stronger grows,
And not a pilgrim passes here,
But seeks beneath your shade repose.
And if your leaves, when dry and sere,
Fall fast at autumn's wintry close,
Yet every falling leaf shall bring
Its vernal tribute to the spring.

Thou native oak, thou German tree,
Fit emblem too of German worth!
Type of a nation brave and free,
And worthy of their native earth!
Ah! what avails to think on thee,
Or on the times when thou hadst birth?
Thou German race, the noblest aye of all,
Thine oaks still stand, while thou, alas! must fall.

The mineralogical excursions and hardy exercises of Körner proved an admirable initiation to military service; and habits of activity and method soon made him thoroughly efficient in his new vocation. It is remarkable that his was the first blood shed after joining the corps; having been sent with a flag of truce, in violation of the armistice, he received a wound without drawing his sabre; and it is also worthy of notice, as illustrating the horrors of war, that he fell, as has been subsequently discovered, by the shot of one of his own countrymen in the enemy's ranks. How beautiful in the retrospect, is the short, but illustrious career we have thus imperfectly traced; how truly deed responded to thought and experience to sentiment in Körner's life! Generous and devoted feelings exalted him above the bitterness of disappoint-

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ment; his days were occupied with acts of high utility and his nights in lofty contemplation.

He used to steal away from the bivouac to the forest, to think of those he loved; and when overcome by the pleadings, tenderness, and the desire for sympathy, he sought refuge in heroic aspirations or pious thought. "If it has been denied me," he writes, "to kneel with my bride at the altar, a bride of steel has been entrusted to me, to whom I have sworn eternal truth." This calmness and resolution is the more striking when we picture Körner to our fancy, charming a select circle with his guitar, or his amateur performance of the Swedish Captain in "Wallenstein," and writing pieces for Humboldt's children; and realize his adaptation to the peaceful happiness of domestic and artist life. The total change in his pursuits and enjoyments is best revealed by his letters, varying in date but a few months. Thus at one time he writes from Vienna; "Would I could have seen you all in a box yesterday. The finest feeling is that of composition itself; next to this ranks the satisfaction of seeing one's work represented with affection and skill; the loftiest lies in the conviction that one has seized the souls of others." "I amuse myself here divinely; am always engaged a week beforehand; and, I may say, am quite the rage:" and soon after, in this strain—"A great moment of my life is approaching. Be convinced you shall find me not unworthy of you when the trial comes:" and again

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from the camp: "The corps already sing several of my songs, and I cannot describe to you how agreeable is the relation in which I live, as the most cultivated and select minds of all Germany are near me in rank and place."

The union of strength of moral purpose and sensibility of feeling in Körner's character, was obvious in his appearance, and exhibits itself vividly in his poems: his dark hair shaded a brow open with truth and prominent with intelligence, but, in moments of determination, knit by a concentrated will; and his blue eye could wear a dauntless as well as a most gentle expression. Conscious of the apparent incongruity at times in his behaviour, he thus naturally explains it in one of his letters: "If you, perchance, have occasionally conceived me to be deficient in warmth of heart, my external manner has deceived you: too warm to be grave and too proud to appear weak, I find I am often exposed to be mistaken, because it is not known why I am thus apparently severe and capricious; both of these moods being in fact only a relief to the overflow of my feelings."

Körner, fortunately, left us a reliable index of his nature in his poems: there we recognise both his heroism and his love in their elemental and spontaneous action; and two of them—one written on parting with his chosen bride, and the other embodying the religious sentiment that hallowed his patriotism, give us, as it were, a key to the apparent

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antagonism but real and divine consistency of his sentiments :

Farewell, farewell!—with silent grief of heart
I breathe adieu to follow duty now;
And if a silent tear unbidden start,
It will not, love, disgrace a soldier's brow.
Where'er I roam, should joy my path illume,
Or death entwine the garland of the tomb,
Thy lovely form shall float my path above,
And guide my soul to rapture and to love!

O hail and bless, sweet spirit of my life,
The ardent zeal that sets my soul on fire;
That bids me take a part in yonder strife,
And for the sword, awhile, forsake the lyre.
For, see, thy minstrel's dreams were not all vain,
Which he so oft hath hallow'd in his strain;
O see the patriot-strife at length awake!
There let me fly and all its toils partake.

The victor's joyous wreath shall bloom more bright
That's pluck'd amid the joys of love and song;
And my young spirit hails with pure delight
The hope fulfilled which it hath cherished long.
Let me but struggle for my country's good,
E'en though I shed for her my warm life-blood.
And now one kiss—e'en though the last it prove;
For there can be no death for our true love!

PRAYER DURING BATTLE.

Father, I invoke thee!
I am involved in clouds of vapour from the warring mouths of fire,
The lightnings of those thunderbolts flash around me.
Ruler of battles, I invoke thee!
Father, lead me on.

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Father, lead me on!
Conduct me to victory; conduct me to death!
Lord, I recognize thy will!
Lord, conduct me as thou wilt!
God! I acknowledge thee!

God, I acknowledge thee!
As in the autumnal whisper of the leaves,
So in the storm of the battle.'
Thee, primeval fountain of grace, I recognize!
Father, oh, bless me!

Father, oh, bless me!
Into thy hands I commend my life!
Thou can'st take it away, thou did'st give it!
In living and in dying, bless me!
Father, I worship thee!

Father, I worship thee!
It is not a combat for the goods of this world;
The most sacred of things we defend with the sword,
Wherefore, falling or conquering, I worship thee!
God to thee I resign myself!

God, to thee I resign myself!
If the thunders of death salute me,
If the blood flow from my opened veins,
To thee, my God, I resign myself!
Thee, Father, I invoke!

Among the many epithets that may justly be given to our times, is that of the age of discrimination. Analysis is now universal; new definitions increase, and shades of meaning in character are observed and noted by the philosophic with no less care than the elements of matter by men of science; all subjects are tested either by the clever method of French nomenclature, the spiritual refinements of German thought, or the bold rhetoric and vigorous sense of the Anglo-

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Saxon mind. Perhaps no human trait has become so modified to common apprehension by this intellectual process than courage. It is now needful that something beyond bold adventure, impetuous warfare, or even patient endurance should exist, in order to gain the renown of bravery. We hesitate at the action to search its motive; the temperament, intelligence, experience, and moral sensibility of the individual are taken into account before we admit his claims to the title of hero.

Whoever has carefully read Foster's "Essay on Decision of Character," De Quincey's "Treatise on the Cæsars," and Carlyle's "Hero-Worship"—all books of the day and more or less popular—cannot fail to discriminate somewhat between the indications of rashness and determination, ferocity and self-control, impulse and hardihood, in judging of those who occupy the foreground of history. Heroism is now regarded as a higher quality than instinct, as more truly characteristic of Dante than Nelson, less questionable in Sir Thomas More than in Murat, and quite as obvious at Valley-Forge as at Waterloo. With all the subtle distinctions, however, that modern enlightenment finds between real and apparent heroism, there are a few absolute principles that stamp the indisputable hero; and among these are a thorough consciousness of the hazard incurred, a voluntary self-renunciation, a deliberate purpose consistently followed, and an honest zeal based on individual sentiment; thus intellect, will, and heart combine to mould

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the hero; and inform his character with an ardour, a harmony and a nobleness equally removed from fanaticism on the one hand and mere hardihood on the other. Where the first development of this spirit is social and literary, and its subsequent phase action and martyrdom—the cycle of heroic life is adequately filled, its conditions realized, and its fame achieved.

Such was the case with Theodore Körner. The vivacity of his mind first exhibited itself in comic pieces that amused the gay Viennese, and wafted the young author prosperously along the flattering tide of metropolitan success; his critics, however, attached to them little intrinsic value; but some of the minor poems scattered through the four volumes, published by his father after his death—most of them written before the age of twenty-two—are permanently enshrined in the literature of his country; they prove the sincerity of his after course; in them are manifest the fiery assailant and the poetical lover; while the more elaborate dramas of "Rosamund" and "Zriny" unfold at length the same innate vigour of the will and the affections; the one inducing fortitude and the other tenderness. The spirit of chivalry and pathos thus emanating from the poet, were actualized by the soldier; and this is Körner's beautiful distinction. His "Sword Song" became the Marseilles Hymn of Germany; and he bravely fought the battle of truth and liberty with the lyre and the sword—thenceforth and for ever blended with his name.

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THE LITERARY ADVENTURER:

RICHARD SAVAGE.

The distinction of civilized society is that human life is systematic, and the natural effect of those circumstances which, in any degree, except an individual from its usual routine and responsibilities, is to induce the impulsive action and precarious expedients that belong to wild races. In the world of opinion and habit I occasionally see those who, goaded by misfortune or inspired by an adventurous temper, break away from the restraint which custom ordains, and by hardihood in action or extravagance of sentiment, practically isolate themselves from nearly all the social obligations acknowledged by mankind. Indeed every human pursuit may be said to have its respectable and its vagabond followers. In trade these extremes are obvious in the merchant and the pedlar;—in the church, we have the bishop and the field-preacher: and in literature, the author who devotes the leisure that ntervenes between the care of his estates and the

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engagements of fashionable society, to a review, a poem, or a history, and the man about town who lives by his wits, and whose dinner is contingent upon a happy epigram or a succesful farce. Even when fortune and rank obtain, natures imbued with a vagrant or adventurous spirit will cut loose from social bondage through mere waywardness or courage, as if there were gipsy blood in their veins, or the instinct of heroism or discovery in their hearts.

The enthusiasm of misanthropy made Byron a pilgrim, that of reform drove Shelley into exile, and that of sentiment won Rousseau to a picturesque hermitage. How much of human conduct depends upon the source whence is derived the inspiration or the sanction of existence! Family pride leads to a constant reference to the standard of external honour; the desire of wealth to a keen adaptation of all occasions to interest; while the consciousness of having nothing beyond personal resources to look to for advancement or happiness, breeds in earnest minds, an independence of mood almost defiant. To this we attribute, in no small degree, the recklessness of Savage. Every circumstance of his life tended to encourage self-will. He found neither in his birth, his fortunes, nor the incidents of his daily experience, any vantage-ground for confidence. Fate seemed to ordain between him and society a perpetual enmity. Hence his dauntless egotism; driven from the outworks of life, he fortified the citadel. Sure of no palladium but his genius, he held it up as a shield

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against the arrows of scorn, or thrust it forth as an authentic emblem of his right to demand from others the satisfaction of his wants. Perhaps there is no instance, if we except Benvenuto Cellini, of more ferocious self-reliance, or rather pertinacity in levying tribute. In his career we realize that the essential traits of civilized and barbarian life may assimilate; that refined mental aptitude may co-exist with extreme personal degradation; and that the support of existence is often as precarious, and the habits of life as vagrant in a Christian metropolis, as among the Indian tribes of America, or the wild hordes of the East.

The genuine literary adventurer is, indeed, a kind of social Ishmaelite, pitching the tent of his convenience as necessity or whim suggests. It is his peculiar destiny to "take no note of time," for he falls into any incidental scheme of festivity at morning, noon or night, joins any band of roisterers he may encounter, takes part in the street-corner discussions of any casual knot of politicians, and is always ready to go to the theatre, the club, a private domicile, or a coffee-house, with the first chance acquaintance he meets. He hangs loose upon the skirts of society. If the immediate is agreeable, he scorns change, and hence will prolong his social visits to the infinite annoyance of those who keep regular hours. Where he breakfasts, dines, or sleeps, is problematical in the morning.

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As the itinerant musician goes forth to win entertainment by his dulcet notes, the vagabond man of genius trusts to his fund of clever stories, his aptitude as a diner-out, his facility at pen-craft, or his literary reputation, to win upon the sympathies of some humane auditor, or chain the attention of the inquisitive, and thus provide for the claims of physical necessity.

His appeal is threefold—to the benevolent, the curious, and the vain; and in a large city, with the *entrée* of a few circles and places of resort, it will be, indeed, a strange hazard that deprives him wholly of these long-tried expedients. His agreeability makes him friends which his indiscretions at length weary; but as he generally prefers to do all the talking himself, he gradually ceases to be fastidious, and when he cannot fraternize with a scholar or a gentleman, contents himself with inferior society. The consciousness of superior gifts and singular misfortunes, soon blunts that delicacy which shrinks from obligation. He receives a favour with the air of a man to whom consideration is a birthright. He is, as Landor says of woman, more sensitive than grateful; borrows money and books without a thought of returning them, and although the most dependent of beings, instantly resents the slightest approach to dictation as a personal insult. He is emphatically what Shakespeare denominates a "landless resolute;" considers prudence too mean a virtue for him to adopt, and

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industry a habit unworthy of his spirit. His wits are his capital, which he invests, day by day—now and then, perhaps, embarking them in a more deliberate venture, by way of polishing his tarnished escutcheon. Equally exempt from the laws of sentiment as those of economy, he makes unconscionable drafts upon the approbativeness and the malignity of others, by inditing panegyrics and lampoons.

A subscription, a dedication, or a satire, by awakening the generosity, the pride, or the fear of the world, alternately supply the exigencies of the moment; while the utter loss of self-respect is prevented by some occasional effort in a nobler vein, or complacent memories of past renown. Custom renders him at home everywhere; address repudiates individual rights; and a kind of happy boldness annihilates, by a stroke of humour or a phrase of geniality, the barriers of artificial reserve. He is the modern knight-errant—prompt to challenge recognition, and, with gallant bearing, win the guerdon for which he aspires, whether it be the smile of beauty, the companionship of rank, or the privileges that wealth dispenses.

Experience in shifts, and a sanguine temper united to capacity for reflection, render him withal a philosopher; so that, although keenly alive to present enjoyment, he can suffer with fortitude, and heroically sport with deprivation. He is vividly conscious of what Madame de Staël declares is one great secret

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of delight—its fragility. His existence is singularly detached from routine, and, like a bird or a butterfly, he soars or alights, as caprice suggests—a chartered adventurer to whom has been presented the freedom of nature. Leisure gives scope to his observation; need quickens his perception; and the very uncertainty of subsistence adds infinitely to the relish of each gratification. A voluntary outlaw, he claims ransom from those his talents have made captive; regarding himself as a public benefactor, he deems society under obligations to take care of him; prodigal in his mental riches, he despises those who are parsimonious either of their time or their hospitality, and sincere in his admiration, and perhaps in his advocacy, of all that is magnanimous and beautiful, he learns to regard material advantage as his just inheritance, which directly to seek, would obscure the heraldry bestowed by his genius and sanctioned by misfortune.

To him might be literally applied Valentine's argument in Fletcher's comedy of "Wit without Money:"

> "Means—
> Why, all good men's my means; my wit 's my plough,
> The town 's my stock, tavern 's my standing-house,
> (And all the world knows there's no want); all gentlemen
> That love society, love me; all purses
> That wit and pleasure open, are my tenants;
> Every man's clothes fit me; the next fair lodging
> Is but my next remove; and when I please
> To be more eminent, and take the air,

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A piece is levied, and a coach prepared,
And I go I care not whither."

" What's my knowledge, uncle ?
Is't not worth money ? What's my understanding ?
Travel! reading! wit! all these digested! My daily
Making men, some to speak, that too much phlegm
Had frozen up; some, that spoke too much, to hold
Their peace, and put their tongues to pensions.
" Besides these ways to teach
The way of nature, a manly love, community
To all that are deservers, not examining
How much or what's done for them; it is wicked."

It is peculiar to this class of men to be unconscious of the diverse attractions of talents and character. Their egotism prevents an habitual recognition of the important fact that the entertainment afforded by conversational abilities and personal sympathy are two very distinct things. Because their talk is listened to with avidity, their wit productive of laughter, and their reputation of deference, they deduce the erroneous conclusion that individually and for themselves an interest is awakened; whereas, in most cases, the charm is purely objective. By men of the world, genius of a literary kind is regarded in the same light as dramatic, artistic and juggling cleverness—the result is not associated with the person; it is the pastime, not the man that wins. A conviction so wounding to self-love is not easily adopted; and, as a natural consequence, the deluded victims of social applause continue, in spite of mortifying experience to look for a degree of consideration, and demand a

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sympathy which it is absurd to expect from any but the very liberal and the naturally kind, who confessedly form the exception, not the rule, in general society. Yet in actors, authors, and artists who possess great self-esteem, this error is the rock upon which the bark of hope invariably splits. There seems to be a kind of inevitable blindness in this regard. Slowly and by long degrees, comes home the feeling that it is what the man of genius does, not what he is, that excites admiration. When the pageant of an hour fades, what care the narrow-minded and the selfish for those who have ministered to their pleasure? Only enthusiasm lingers and pays tribute; only gratitude is sensible of an obligation incurred; reverence alone dreams of any return, and conscientiousness is the sole monitor that pays the debt.

The incidents of his life rather than the creations of his genius have preserved the fame of Savage. His poems are his only writings now recognised, and we find them regularly included in editions of the British anthology; it is, however, but here and there, scattered through a long array of heroics, that we can detect either originality or raciness. Like his life these effusions are crude and unsustained; they lack finish, completeness, and unity. Deformed by coarseness, and sometimes by obscurity, they often repel taste; and their frequent want of clear and uniform design induces weariness. Their most genuine interest is personal; we naturally associate them with the mis-

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fortunes of the author, and the special references are not without a pathetic zest. The "Progress of a Divine" and "The Bastard," although redeemed by wit and cleverness, are too grossly indelicate for general perusal. The bitterness of the one and the confident hilarity with which the other begins, are very characteristic of Savage. It is evident that he possessed, in an uncommon degree, what the phrenologists call the organ of wonder, and metaphysical writers a sense of the sublime. In his descriptions of nature and life, we perceive the inspiration of a reflective ideality. His couplets occasionally glow with vital animation, and his choice of epithets is often felicitous. Vigour, fluency, and expressiveness, at times indicate that there was an original vein in his nature, though too carelessly worked to produce a great and consistent result. "The Wanderer" is the poem upon which he evidently bestowed the greatest care. It may be regarded as his own epitaph, written by himself, and embodying the dark phases of his career, the most vivid of his sensations, and the beauty of his moral sentiments, combined with the want of system, the self-esteem, recklessness and courage which alternated in his feelings and conduct.

The following passages evidently allude to actual experience:

> "Is chance a guilt? that my disastrous heart
> For mischief never meant, should ever smart?
> Can self-defence be sin? Ah, plead no more!
> What though no purposed malice stain thee o'er!

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Had heaven befriended thy unhappy side,
Thou had'st not been provoked or thou had'st died."

* * * *

——" No mother's care
Shielded my infant innocence with prayer;
No father's guardian hand my youth maintained,
Called forth my virtues or from vice restrained."

He learned the process of glass-manufacturing, by sleeping during winter nights, when a vagrant, near the furnaces:

"Yon limeless sands, loose driving with the wind,
In future cauldrons useful textures find,
Till on the furnace thrown, the glowing mass
Brightens and brightening, hardens into glass."

The homeliness of such lines is like Crabbe, yet his capacity for more polished versification is shown in his allusion to Pope, as polished and emphatic as that of the master rhymer himself:

"Though gay as mirth, as curious though sedate,
As elegance polite, as pow'r elate,
Profound as reason and as justice clear,
Soft as compassion and as truth severe;
As bounty copious, as persuasion sweet,
Like nature various and like art complete,
So firm her morals, so sublime her views,
His life is almost equalled by his muse."

In metaphor, also, Savage is effective. Thus he compares the "steamy currents" at morning twilight, to "veins blue winding on a fair one's arm," and of a river hidden in umbrage, observes

"Yet, at one point, winds out in silver state,
Like virtue from a labyrinth of fate."

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He calls shells "tinctured rivals of the showery bow," and, describing a vast prospect, says

> "The herds seem insects in the distant glades,
> And men diminished as, at noon, their shades."

His adjectives are sometimes very graphic, however inelegant; he speaks of warming himself at "*chippy* fires," and detailing a repast, informs us

> "That o'er a homely board a napkin's spread,
> Crowned with a *heapy* canister of bread."

The gleams of high sentiment that, like flashes of heat-lightning from a dense cloud, emanate from Savage, are refreshing, and justify his biographer's tribute to his better nature. Self-indulgent as he was, he declares that

> "Reason's glory is to quell desire."

Although he obviously is in his element when

> "In gay converse glides the festive hour,"

he yet recognises a providence in affliction :—

> "Why should I then of private loss complain,
> Of loss that proves, perchance, a brother's gain ?
> The wind that binds one bark within the bay,
> May waft a richer freight its wished-for way.
> Man's bliss is like his knowledge, but surmised,
> One ignorance, the other pain disguised.
> When seeking joy, we seldom sorrow miss,
> And often misery points the path to bliss.
> Know, then, if ills oblige thee to retire,
> *Those ills solemnity of thought inspire.*"

The following random extracts betray a vivid consciousness of his own fate and tendencies :

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"False pride! what vices on our conduct steal
From the world's eye one frailty to conceal!
Ye cruel mothers! soft! those words command!
So near shall cruelty and mother stand?
Can the dove's bosom snaky venom draw?
Can her foot sharpen like the vulture's claw?"

* * * *

"Loosed to the world's wide range, enjoined no aim,
Prescribed no duty and assigned no name,
Nature's unbounded son, he stands alone,
His heart unbiassed and his mind his own."

* * * *

"From ties maternal, moral and divine,
Discharg'd my gasping soul; pushed me from shore,
And launched me into life without an oar."

* * * *

"Born to himself, by no profession led,
In freedom fostered, and by fortune fed,
Nor guides, nor rules, his sovereign choice control,
His body independent as his soul."

* * * *

"Inly secure, *though conscious soon of ill,*
Nor taught by wisdom how to balance will,
Rashly deceived, I saw no pits to shun,
But thought to purpose and to act were one."

That we have not exaggerated the prominent claim of Savage to represent the literary adventurer, a glance at the account of him by Johnson—(the most remarkable and original of his "Lives of the Poets")—will, at once, evidence. We are there told that, when a guest, he "could neither be persuaded to go to bed at night, or rise by day;" that "he considered himself discharged by the first quarrel, from all ties of honour and gratitude;" that "when he loved a man, he

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suppressed all his faults, and when he had been offended by him, suppressed all his virtues;"— "always asked favours without the least submission or apparent consciousness of dependence:" "purchased the luxury of a night by the anguish of cold and hunger for a week;" "though he scarcely ever found a stranger whom he did not leave a friend, he had not often a friend long, without obliging him to become a stranger;" and that "the reigning error of his life was that he mistook the *love* for the *practice* of virtue."

We could easily multiply well authenticated instances of the foibles and the inconsiderateness, the casual triumphs and low expedients that doomed him to vibrate "between beggary and extravagance." To indicate the relative value he attached to his inward resources and his outward obligations, a few anecdotes will suffice. While an inmate of Lord Tyrconnel's family, he sold several books which his host had presented him with his lordship's arms stamped upon them; and, at the same time, betrayed the most fastidious and even "superstitious regard to the correction of his proof-sheets." While on the most intimate and friendly terms with Dennis, he wrote an epigram against him; and when his friends, their patience quite exhausted, contributed to secure him a permanent retreat in the country, he indulged in the most illusive dreams of rural felicity, and before he was half-way on the road to Wales, sent

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back to London for new supplies, which he soon expended among pleasant companions in Bristol, whose keen appreciation of his social qualities induced a versified comparison of their merits with those of his London protectors, by no means to the advantage of the latter, notwithstanding his recent obligations. The reverse of Dominie Sampson, he was very scornful at the idea of new habiliments being furnished him without the intervention of his own taste and authority. The mortification of illegitimacy was solaced by that of noble blood and the advantages he traced to "the lusty stealth of nature." Scenes of profligacy, social ostracism, and a criminal trial utterly failed in undermining a "steady confidence in his own capacity;" while he only regarded poverty as an evil from the contempt it is apt to engender; and he always thought himself justified in resenting neglect "without attempting to force himself into regard." Such a combination of traits developed under extraordinary vicissitudes, completely illustrate the spirit of literary adventure, and the perversity of unregulated talent.

Yet this dark biographical picture, gloomy as one of Spagnoletto's martyrdoms, is not without mellow tints, nor its hard outlines unrelieved by touches of humanity. Upon his first discovery of a mother's name and existence, revealed to him by several documents found among the effects of his deceased nurse, the heart of Savage awakened to all the latent tenderness inspired by a new-born affection. It was his

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habit, long after the determined repulse of his unnatural parent had quenched the hope of recognition, to walk to and fro before her house, in the twilight, amply compensated if, through his tears, he could obtain but a glimpse of her robe as she passed near the window, or see the gleam of a candle in her chamber. At the period of his greatest want and highest mental activity, he composed while perambulating a verdant square, or retired mall, and then entered a shop, asked for a scrap of paper, and noted down his conceptions. In this manner he is said to have written an entire tragedy; and certainly few instances of resolute authorship in the grasp of poverty can equal its touching fortitude.

His speech to the court when arraigned for sentence after being convicted of homicide, is said to have been manly and eloquent, and certainly won for him great sympathy and respect. There must have been something in his character that inspired esteem as well as in his fortunes to kindle compassion, from the interest so frequently excited and patiently manifested in his behalf by individuals widely separated in position and opinions. In some instances, too, the independence of his nature exhibited itself in a noble manner. The spirited letter which he addressed to a friend from the prison at Bristol, where he was incarcerated for debt, and so drearily terminated his eventful career, is a fine example of self-respect and elevation of sentiment. Hunt justly remarks, in his notice of the

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once celebrated Mrs. Oldfield, that her annuity to Savage gave posterity a liking for her; and Dr. Johnson assures us that the subject of his remarkable memoir, when banished from London, parted from him with tears in his eyes.

Indeed the phases of character, and the actual experiences of Savage, if analysed and dramatically unfolded by a thoroughly sympathetic delineator, would afford a most fruitful theme. Imagine it handled by Dickens, in his best vein; we should have night-wanderings as forlorn as those of little Nell and her grandfather, a trial scene more effective than that of Barnaby Rudge, jollities eclipsing those of Dick Swiveller, and reveries more grandly pathetic than the death-bed musings of Paul Dombey. For accessories his acknowledged relation to the nobility and his intimate association with the men of talent of the day would furnish ample scope, for so notorious was his story at the time, that Macaulay, in his "History of England," says that Earl Rivers is remembered chiefly on account of his illegitimate son; and the Countess of Macclesfield, brazen as was her temper, was obliged to fly from Bath to escape the observation of fashionable crowds induced by the satirical poem of Savage, called "The Bastard."

Prompted by that love of excitement which becomes the ruling impulse of the improvident and forlorn, Savage went forth one night, from his obscure lodgings in search of profitable meditation, a boon

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companion, or a lucky adventure. There was in his elongated and rough face a sad expression that indicated habitual melancholy—not the resigned air of meek endurance, nor the gravity of stern fortitude; but that dark, brooding pensiveness which accompanies undisciplined passions and a desolate existence. There was, however, a redeeming dignity in his measured gait and an unsteady accent in his voice as he soliloquized, that would have "challenged pity" in a sensitive observer.

He entered a tavern—an accustomed haunt, where conviviality had often beguiled him of "the thing he was." The sight of one or two familiar faces, and the anticipation of a jolly evening changed, at once, the mood of the homeless wit. That coarse exterior suddenly wore a milder aspect; that solemn air gave way to *abandon;* and, all at once, he looked like a man ready to "flit the time lightly" and "rouse the night-owl with a catch." It was thoughtfulness eclipsed by good fellowship,—Hamlet transformed into Sir Toby Belch. The carousal brought on the hour of feverish reaction, and the party at length sallied out to breathe the fresh air, and vent their superfluous merriment. Attracted by a light that gleamed from another house of entertainment, they entered, and unceremoniously disturbed a group already in possession. High words arose, swords were unsheathed, and when the morning dawned, Savage found himself a prisoner awaiting trial for murder. At this crisis of his fate, with the ban of

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the law impending, amid the solitude of captivity—how must the events of his life have passed, in gloomy succession, before his mind, and what desperate emotion the retrospect engendered!

We can scarcely imagine a more contradictory and pathetic story invented by fiction. The illegitimate offspring of a Countess and an Earl, brought up by a hireling, taken from St. Albans grammar-school in boyhood, to be apprenticed to a shoemaker; cut off by an infamous falsehood, from the inheritance assigned him by his father;—accidentally discovering his birth only to become the object of relentless maternal persecution; with the loss of his nurse, cast adrift upon the world and forced into authorship to escape starvation, and now only with the prospect of an ignominious death incurred in a tavern brawl—what incentives his memory could furnish to remorse and despair! His whole experience was anomalous. Of noble origin, yet the frequent associate of felons and paupers, with a mother for his most bitter enemy, and the slayer of one who never offended him; long accustomed to luxury, yet finding his best comfort in a gaol; conscious of superior abilities, yet habituated to degrading expedients; his written life touching the hearts of thousands, while his actual condition annoyed more often than it interested; the guest of a wealthy lord, the confidant of men of genius, the intimate of Wilkes and Steele, and the cynosure of many select circles in London and Bristol, he some-

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times famished for want of nourishment and "slept on bulks in summer and in glass-houses in the winter." From the king he received a pardon, after being condemned to the gallows, and from a fashionable actress a pension; the queen's volunteer-laureate, he died in a prison-cell, and was buried at the expense of the gaoler. The records of human vicissitude have few more painful episodes; the plots of few tragedies boast more pathetic material; and the legacies of genius, to those who explore them to analyse character and trace the influence of experience upon mental development, rarely offer the adventurous and melancholy interest that is associated with the name of Richard Savage. He is the type of reckless talent, the ideal of a literary vagabond, the synonym for an unfortunate wit. In his history the adventures of hack-writers reach their acme; and his consciousness embraced the vital elements of dramatic experience—the internal light of fancy and reflection, and the external shade of appalling fact.

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THE VOCALIST:

JENNY LIND.

"Sure something holy lodges in that breast,
And with mere rapture moves the vocal air,
To testify its hidden residence.
How sweetly did they float upon the wings
Of Silence, through the empty-vaulted night,
At every fall smoothing the raven down
Of darkness till it smiled."—*Comus.*

THE Life of the North is to us a fresh revelation; and, by a striking coincidence, one after another of its phases have come upon our transatlantic vision, in rapid succession. To many Americans Thorwaldsen was the only name associated with art, but a few years since; and to those who had visited Rome, the benign and venerable man was a vivid and pleasing reminiscence, appropriate to the idea of his grand apostolic figures, and the affectionate honour in which his native Denmark held their noble sculptor. But with Ole Bull fairly commenced our knowledge of

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the genius of Northern Europe. The play of the wind through her forest of pines, the glint of her frozen streams, the tenderness of her households, and the solemnity of her faith, seemed to breathe in the wizard tones of his violin; while her integrity was written in the form, the manners, and the very smile of the musician. Then the spirit of her literature began slowly to win its gentle but impressive way to the American heart. Longfellow's translation of Bishofs Tegner's "Children of the Lord's Supper," with the graphic introduction descriptive of moral life in Sweden, touched the same chord in New England breasts, that had vibrated to the religious pathos of Bryant, Dana, and Hawthorne; while not a few readers became simultaneously aware of a brave Danish poet recently followed to the tomb by the people of Copenhagen, with every token of national grief. The dramas of Œhlenschläger, from their union of familiar expression with the richest feeling, though but partially known in this country, awakened both curiosity and interest. Then, too, came to us the domestic novels of Miss Bremer, portraying so heartily the life of home in Sweden, and appealing to the most universal sympathies of our people. Finally, Hans Andersen's delicious story-books veiling such fine imaginative powers under the guise of the utmost simplicity, raised up for him scores of juvenile admirers, while children of a larger growth enjoyed the originality of his fictions with equal zest, as the

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offspring of rare human sympathy and original invention. The pictures wafted to our shores by the late revolutionary exigencies of the Continent, have often yielded glimpses of northern scenery. Norwegian forests, skies and mountains, attracted the eye at the Dusseldorf gallery; and thus through both art and literature, the simple, earnest, and poetic features of life in the north, were brought within the range of our consciousness. It developed unimagined affinities with our own; and now, as it were, to complete and consecrate the revelation, we are to hear the vocal genius of Northern Europe—the Swedish nightingale, Jenny Lind, is coming!

From an unpretending edifice in one of the by-streets of the city of Stockholm in Sweden, a quarter of a century ago, a troop of children might have been seen to emerge, at noon, and break the silence that at other hours invested the place, with the lively chat and quick laughter natural to emancipated scholars. In a few moments they dispersed to their several homes, and early the next day were again visible, one by one, disappearing, with a more subdued bearing, within the portal of the humble domicile.

Stockholm is justly regarded as the most elegant city of Northern Europe. It is situated at the junction of the lake Mälar with an inlet of the Baltic. Although usually described as founded on seven isles, it is, in point of fact, mainly situated on three; the smallest and most central having been the original

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site, and still constituting the most populous and active section. The irregularity of its form, and the blending of land and water, renders the appearance of the city remarkably picturesque. From the elevated points, besides the various buildings, craft of all kinds in motion and at anchor, numerous bridges and a fine background of mountains are discernible, and combine to form a beautiful panorama. The royal palace is exceeded in magnificence only by that of Versailles.

Through this busy and varied scene, on a pleasant day, there moved rapidly the carriage of one of those useful, though unrecognized beings, who seem born to appreciate the gifts which God so liberally dispenses, but whom the insensibility and selfishness of mankind, in general, permit to languish in obscurity until a fortunate circumstance brings them to light. Some time previous, the good lady, in passing the seminary to which we have alluded, had been struck with the beauty of a child's voice that rose blithely from the dwelling. She was induced to alight and enter; and her astonishment was only increased upon discovering that this cheerful song came from a diminutive girl, busied in arranging the schoolroom, during a temporary recess. She learned that this maiden was the daughter of the schoolmistress; and the somewhat restricted air of homely comfort visible in the establishment, and the tinge of severity in the manners of the mother, contrasted forcibly in the lady's imagination with the

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apparently instinctive soaring of the child's spirit into the atmosphere of song, from her dim and formal surroundings, as the skylark lifts itself from a lowly nest among the dark weeds up to the crystal heavens. It was a sweet illustration of the law of compensation.

The air the child was singing, as she busied herself about the room, was a simple native strain, quite familiar and by no means difficult of execution; it was the quality of the voice, the natural flow of the notes, the apparent ease, grace, and earnest sweetness of the little songstress, that gained the visitor's ear and heart; and now she had come to urge upon the parents the duty of affording every encouragement to develop a gift so rare and beautiful; she expressed her conviction that the child was born for a musical artist, and destined not only to redeem her parents from want, but to do honour to her country. This impression was deepened when she learned that this musical tendency manifested itself as early as the age of three, and that the little girl had long awakened the wonder of the family by repeating accurately even intricate airs, after having heard them but once; that she had thus sung habitually, spontaneously, and seemed to find of her own volition, a peculiar consolation in the act for the dry routine of her life, though from without, not a single circumstance gave any impulse or direction to this vocal endowment.

She exhibited also to the just perception of Madame

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Lundberg, herself a celebrated Swedish actress, as well as a benevolent woman, the usual conditions of genius, in backward physical growth, precocious mental vigour, and mature sensibilities. The latter, indeed, were so active, that her mother, and even her kind adviser doubted if she possessed sufficient energy of character for so trying a profession as that of an artist; and this consideration, added to the prejudice of the parents against a public, and especially a theatrical career, for a time, chilled the hopes of the enthusiastic patroness. At length, however, their consent was obtained that the experiment should be tried, and the diffident little girl, only accustomed to domestic privacy, but with a new and strange hope wildly fluttering in her bosom, was taken to Croelius—a veteran music-master of Stockholm; who was so delighted with her rare promise that one day he led her to the house of Count Pucke, then director of the court theatre. Her reception, however, did not correspond with the old man's desires; for the nobleman coldly inquired what he was expected to do with such a child? It must be confessed that the absence of beauty and size did not, at the first glance, create any high anticipations in behalf of the demure maiden. Croelius, though disappointed, was quite undismayed; he entreated the director to hear her sing, and declared his purpose to teach her gratuitously, if he could in no other way secure the cultivation of her voice and talents. This earnestness

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induced the count to listen with attention and candour; and the instant she had finished, he exclaimed, "She shall have all the advantages of the Stockholm Academy!" Such was Jenny Lind's initiation into the life of an artist.

She now began regularly to appear on the stage, and was soon an adept in juvenile parts. She proved widely attractive in vaudevilles, which were written expressly for her; and it is remarkable that the charm did not lie so much in the precocious intelligence, as in the singular geniality of the little actress. Nature thus early asserted her dominion. There was an indefinable human interest, a certain original vein that universally surprised and fascinated, while it took from the child the *eclât* of a mere infant phenomenon, by bringing her from the domain of vulgar wonder into the range of that refined sympathy one touch of which "makes the whole world kin." In a year Croelius reluctantly gave up his pupil to Berg, who to kindred zeal united far more energy; and by him she was inducted thoroughly into the elements of her art.

Probation is quite as essential to the true development of art as encouragement. The eager, impassioned, excitable temperament needs to be chastened, the recklessness of self-confidence awed, and that sublime patience induced through which reliable and tranquil energy takes the place of casual and unsustained activity. By nature Jenny Lind was

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thoughtful and earnest, disposed to silence, and instinctively reserved; while the influence of her early home was to subdue far more than to exhilarate. The change in her mode of life and prospects was so unexpected, her success as a juvenile prodigy so brilliant, and the universal social favour she enjoyed, on account of the winsome amiability of her character, so fitted to elate a youthful heart, that we cannot but regard it as one of the many providential events of her career, that just at the critical moment when the child was losing herself in the maiden, and nature and education were ultimately shaping her artistic powers, an unexpected impediment was allowed to check her already too rapid advancement; and a pause, sad enough at the time, but fraught with enduring benefit, gave her occasion to discipline and elevate her soul, renew her overtasked energies, and plume her wings for flights more sustained and lofty.

Yet, while thus aware of the utility of her trial, we can easily imagine its bitterness. The loss of a gift of nature through which a human being has learned to find both the solace and the inspiration of existence, upon which the dearest hopes were founded, and by which the most glorious triumphs were achieved, is one of those griefs few can realize. Raphael's gentle heart bled when feebleness unnerved the hand that guided the pencil to such lovely issues, and big tears rolled down Scott's manly cheek when he strove in vain to go on with his latest composition. How

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desolate then must that young aspirant for the honour, and the delights of the vocal art, have felt when suddenly deprived of her voice! The dream of her youth was broken in a moment. The charm of her being faded like a mist; and the star of hope that had thus far beamed serenely on her path, grew dim in the cold twilight of disappointment—keen, entire and apparently irremediable. This painful condition was aggravated by the fact that her age now rendered it out of the question to perform childish parts, while it did not authorize those of a mature character.

The circumstances, too, of her failure were singularly trying. She was announced to appear as Agatha in Weber's "Frieschutz"—a character she had long regarded as that in which her ability would be genially tested. To it her young ambition had long pointed, and with it her artistic sympathies were familiarly identified. The hour came, and that wonderful and delicate instrument—that as a child she had governed so adroitly, that it seemed the echo of her mind;—that subtle medium through which her feelings had been wont to find such ready and full vent, refused to obey her will, yielded not to the pleadings of love or ambition; was hushed as by some cruel magic—and Jenny Lind was mute, with anguish in her bosom; her friends looking on in tearful regret, and her maestro chagrined beyond description! Where had those silvery tones fled? What catastrophe had all at once loosened those invisible harp strings? The splendid vision of fame, of bounteous pleasure, of

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world-excited sympathy, and of triumphant art, disappeared like the gorgeous cities seen by the traveller, from the Straits of Messina, painted in tinted vapour on the horizon.

Jenny Lind ceased to sing, but her love of art was deepened, her trust in nature unshaken, her simplicity and kindliness as real as before. Four long years she lived without the rich promise that had invested her childhood; but, with undiminished force of purpose, she studied the art for which she felt herself born, with patient, acute, earnest assiduity, and then another, and blissful episode rewarded her quiet heroism. The fourth act of "Robert le Diable" had been announced for a special occasion; and it so happened that in consequence of the insignificant *rôle* of Alice, consisting of a single solo, no one of the regular singers was disposed to adopt the character. In this emergency, Berg was reminded of his unfortunate pupil. She meekly consented to appear, pleased with an opportunity to be useful, and oblige her kind maestro.

While practising this solo, to the delight and astonishment of both teacher and pupil, the long-lost voice suddenly re-appeared. It seemed as if Nature had only withdrawn the gift for a season, that her child might gather strength and wisdom to use it efficiently, and in an unselfish spirit; and then restored it as a deserved recompense for the resignation and truth with which the deprivation had been borne. We can fancy the rapturous emotions of the gentle votary that night, when she retired from the scene of her

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new and unanticipated triumph. The occasion has been aptly compared to the memorable third act of the "Merchant of Venice" on the evening of Kean's *début* at Drury Lane. Jenny Lind immediately reverted to her cherished ideal part—that of Agatha. She was now sixteen years of age—her character rendered firm by discipline, her love of music deepened by more comprehensive views and a better insight, and her whole nature warmed and softened by the realization of the fondest and earliest hopes, long baffled, yet consistently cherished. The most experienced actors were struck with wonder at the facility and perfection of her dramatic style; in this, as in her vocalism, was, at once, recognized that peculiar truth to nature which constitutes the perfection of art—that unconsciousness of self and circumstance, and that fresh idea of character, at once so uncommon and so delightful. She drew the orchestra after her by her bold yet true execution; and seemed possessed with the genius of the composer as well as with the idiosyncrasies of the character she sung, so complete and individual was the result.

Already the idol of her native city, and the hope of the Swedish stage, her own ideas of art and aims as an artist remained unchanged. Her first desire was to seek the instruction of Garcia, with a view to perfect her method and subdue some vocal difficulties. She gracefully acknowledged the social homage and theatrical distinction awarded her; but these were but

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incidental to a great purpose. She had a nobler ambition to satisfy, a higher ideal to realize, and pressed on her still obstructed way, unallured by the pleasures of the moment and undismayed by the distance of the goal. In order to obtain the requisite means for a sojourn at Paris, she made excursions through Norway and Sweden, with her father, during the vacations of the theatre, to give concerts, and when sufficient had thus been acquired, she obtained leave of absence from the Stockholm director, and left home for Paris, notwithstanding the dissuasion of her parents. They confided, however, as before, in her own sense of right; and she hastened to place herself under the instruction of Garcia.

Here another keen disappointment subdued her reviving hopes. At the first trial, her new teacher said: "My child, you have no voice; do not sing a note for three months, and then come and resume again." Once more she wrapped herself in the mantle of patience, went into studious retirement, and, at the prescribed time, again returned to Garcia, whose cheering words now were, "My child, you can begin your lessons immediately." Simple words, indeed, but more welcome to that ardent child of song, intent on progress in the art she loved, than the wildest plaudits. She returned with an elastic step, and entered with joyful enthusiasm upon her artistic career. Meyerbeer immediately offered her an engagement at Berlin. The consummate skill of her teacher, and her

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own enlarged experience and high resolves, made her advancement rapid and genuine. Thenceforth a series of musical triumphs unexcelled in the history of the lyrical drama, attended the life of Jenny Lind. We might repeat countless anecdotes of the universal admiration and profound sympathy she excited at Berlin, Vienna, Dresden, Bremen, Munich, Aix la Chapelle, and, indeed, wherever her voice was heard on the stage and at concerts. The testimonies of the highest private regard, and public appreciation, were lavished upon her in the shape of costly gifts, wreaths of silver, poetic tributes, philosophical criticisms, the breathless silence or overwhelming applause of entranced multitudes, and all the signs of enthusiastic delight at the advent of a true child of nature and of song. To us the record of her two visits to England are yet vivid, and it is needless to reiterate the extraordinary demonstrations which there attested her singular merits, and unequalled attractiveness.

The population of Berlin and Vienna assembled at midnight to bid her adieu; and when she last left her native city, every ship in the harbour was manned and every quay crowded to see her embark in the presence of the queen. Nor are these spontaneous tributes to be exclusively ascribed to the love of novelty and the excitement of renown. Heroes and heroines the world cannot do without, unless it lapses into frigid and selfish materialism; admiration for talent and sympathy with genius are but human instincts. It is

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seldom, however, that these sentiments are upheld and sanctioned by reverence for worth. Therefore is it beautiful to witness the voluntary oblations which attend the great artist whose expression, however eloquent, is the true manifestation of a pure, noble, and disinterested spirit. It is not Jenny Lind in her personality, but as a priestess of art, an interpreter of humanity, a gifted and loyal expositor of feelings, that lends grace to life and elevation to the soul, that draws the common heart toward her with such frank and ardent gratulation. Her well-known and unostentatious charities, her simplicity of life, her sympathy with her fellow-creatures, and unaffected manners, so accord with the glorious art she so rarely illustrates as to justify to reflection the impulsive admiration she excites.

It is not in sublimity that Jenny Lind excels; and whatever excellence her Norma may possess, it is not of that characteristic species which renders her impersonations of "La Figlia del Regimento," of Alice, of Lucia, and of Amina, so memorable. In the former character she makes innocent play through the rude habits acquire din the camp, in a way so exquisite as to enchant as by the spell of reality. In the "Bride of Lammermoor," there is a melancholy beauty which haunts the listener. It is her greatest tragic part. The pathos of the third act seems re-produced from the very genius which created the romance. Her Amina is Bellini's; and this is saying all that praise

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can utter. We may realize her versatility by comparing the comic jealousy so archly displayed in the "Noces de Figaro," with the tenderness of the sleep-walking scene in "La Somnambula." It has been well observed of her that, in the former opera, "she adheres to the genius of Mozart with a modest appreciation of the genius of that master"—a commendation as high as it is rare. One of the most remarkable traits of her artistic skill is its exquisite and wonderful discrimination—a quality no description can make obvious.

The peculiar charm of Jenny Lind, as an artist, is her unconsciousness. We are disposed to regard this as one of the most reliable tests of superior gifts. It at least proves the absorption of self in what is dearer—a condition essential to all true greatness. The most acute observers of this beautiful vocalist fail to detect the slightest reference either to her audience or herself while engaged in a part. For the time being her very existence seems identified with the character she represents; it is the after-thought, not the impression of the moment that brings us to the artist; infected by the complete realization of the scene, we think of it alone; and only when it has passed away do we become aware that the genius of another has, as it were, incarnated a story or a sentiment before us, through will, sympathy and talent. The process is quite as unthought of as that by which a masterpiece of painting or sculpture has been executed, when we stand before it

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rapt in that harmonious spell that permits no analysis and suggests no task-work, any more than the landscape of summer, or the effulgence of a star. We feel only the presence of the beautiful, the advent of a new creation, the irresistible appeal to the highest instincts of the soul.

Carlyle says "the unconscious is the alone complete"—an aphorism which Jenny Lind robs of all mystery; for her superiority consists in the wholeness and unity of her effects, and this is produced by a kind of self-surrender, such as we rarely see except in two of the most genuine phases of humanity—genius and childhood; in this tendency they coalesce; and hence the freshness that lingers around the richly endowed nature, and the universal faith which it inspires. The secret is that such characters have never wandered far from nature; they have kept within sight of that "immortal sea that brought us hither;" they constitute an aristocracy spontaneously recognized by all; and they triumph as poets, artists, and influential social beings, not through the exercise of any rare and wonderful gift, but from obedience to the simple laws of truth—to the primal sympathies, and to a kind of innate and glorious confidence which lifts them above ignoble fear and selfish tricks. The true hero, poet, artist, the true man or woman, who seem to the multitude to be peculiarly endowed, differ from those who do them voluntary homage, chiefly in this unconsciousness of self; this capacity to be ever "nobler than their

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moods;" this sympathetic breadth of life that enables them to go forth with a kind of elemental power and enter into other forms of being: the principle of their existence is faith, not dexterity; sentiment, not calculation.

It will be seen that we recognise a moral basis as the source of Jenny Lind's fascination; and if we were obliged to define this in a single word, perhaps the lexicon would furnish none so expressive as the homely one—*truth*. But we use it as significant of far more than the absence of falsehood; we mean by it candour, trust, spontaneity, directness. We believe that Jenny Lind inspires sympathy in spite of her petite figure, not altogether because she warbles enchantingly, and has amiable manners, but also on account of the faith she at once excites. We perceive that love of approbation is not her ruling impulse, although her profession might excuse it; but that she has an ideal of her own, an artistic conscience, a love of art, a musical ministry to satisfy and accomplish, and that these considerations induce a nobler ambition than co-exists with mere vanity. It is said that the remarkable novel of "Consuelo," by George Sand, is founded on the character and history of Jenny Lind. Whether this be so or not, the theory of the tale, the guileless devotion to art as such, which stamps the heroine with such exalted grace, finds a parallel in this famed vocalist of the North; the same singleness of purpose and intact

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clearness of soul, the same firm will and gentle heart are evident. Much, too, of her success is attributable to the philosophy of Consuelo's *maestro*—that to reach the highest excellence in Art, the affections as well as the mind must be yielded at her shrine. There is a subtle and deep relation between feeling and expression, and the biographies of those who have achieved renown in the latter, under any of its artistic forms, indicate that it has embodied that within them that found no adequate response in actual life.

The highest efforts of the poet and musician, are confessedly the result of baffled or overflowing emotion; disguised, perhaps, as to the form, but clearly evident in the tone of their productions. Mozart and Raphael, Bryant and Paganini, have illustrated this most emphatically. Jenny Lind seems to have kept her better feelings alive by the habitual exercise of benevolence, and a diffusive friendliness, while her concentrated and earnest activity finds utterance in her art. Hence the sway she has gained over countless hearts, each absorbed in its own dream or shadowed by its own regrets, that glow again in the kindling atmosphere of song, which gushes from a soul over which no overmastering passion has yet cast a gloom, and whose transparent waters no agitation of conflicting desires has ever made turbid and restless. Jenny Lind has been a priestess at the shrine of Art, and therefore interprets its oracles "as one having authority."

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In this country the idea of fashion and the mere relish of amusement, have blended so exclusively with the support of the Opera, that we seldom realize its artistic relations and influence. The taste for the Italian Opera seems to have extended in the ratio of civilization; and although it is, after all, an exotic among the Anglo-Saxons—a pleasure born in the "sweet South," and in its very richness of combination, suggestive of the impassioned feeling and habitual luxury of those climes—yet, on the other hand, it is typical of the complex life, wants and tendencies of modern society. The old English tragic drama, robust, fierce-hearted and unadorned, has faded before it; the theatre as a reunion of wits, and an arena for marvellous histrionic effects, as a subject of elegant criticism, and a nucleus for universal sympathy, may be said not to exist; while the Opera has become the scene of display, elegance and pleasure, and of the highest triumphs.

The sentiment of the age has written itself in music —its wide intelligence, its keen analysis, its revolutionary spirit, its restlessness, and its humanity, may be traced in the rich and brilliant combinations of Rossini, in the grand symphonies of Beethooven, in the pleading tenderness of Bellini, and in the mingled war-notes and sentiment of Verdi. The demand for undisguised and free expression, characteristic of the times, finds also its requisite scope in the lyrical drama. Recitation is too tame, pantomime too silent, scenic art

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too illusive, costume too familiar, music too unpicturesque; but all these combined are, at once, as romantic, exciting, impressive, and melo-dramatic as the varied aptitudes, the exacting taste, and the broad, experimental genius of the age. The gifts of nature, the resources of art, the gratification of the senses, the exigencies of fashion and taste, and the wants of the heart and imagination find in the Opera a most convenient luxury. The lyrical drama has thus gradually usurped the place of tournament and theatre; it is a social as well as an artistic exponent of the day; and those who have best illustrated it are justly regarded as public benefactors. Few, however, have ministered in this temple, with the artless grace, the pure enthusiasm, the glory of Jenny Lind. The daughters of the South, ardent and susceptible, but capricious and extravagant, heretofore won its chief honours; their triumphs have been great but spasmodic, gained by impulse rather than nature, by glorious gifts of person rather than rare graces of soul.

Jenny Lind, with her fair hair and blue eyes, her unqueenly form, and child-like simplicity, has achieved almost unparalleled success, by means quite diverse. Her one natural gift is a voice of singular depth, compass, flexibility and tone. This has been, if we may be allowed the expression, mesmerized by a soul, earnest, pure and sincere; and thus with the clear perception and dauntless will of the North

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has she interpreted the familiar musical dramas in a new, vivid, and original manner. One would imagine she had come with one bound from tending her flock on the hill-side, to warble behind the foot-lights; for so directly from the heart of nature springs her melody, and so beyond the reach of art is the simple grace of her air and manners, that we associate her with the Opera only through the consummate skill—the result of scientific training—manifested in her vocalism. The term warbling is thus adapted peculiarly to express the character of her style; its ease, fluency, spontaneous gush, and the total absence of every thing meretricious and exaggerated in the action and bearing that accompanies it. It is like the song of a bird, only more human. Nature in her seems to have taken Art to her bosom, and assimilated it, through love, with herself, until the identity of each is lost in the other.

The union of such musical science—such thoroughly disciplined art with such artlessness and simplicity, is, perhaps, the crowning mystery of her genius. To know and to love are the conditions of triumph in all the exalted spheres of human labour; and in the musical drama, they have never been so admirably united. Her command of expression seems not so much the result of study as of inspiration; and there is about her a certain gentle elevation which stamps her to every eye, as one who is consecrated to a high

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service. Her ingenuous countenance, always enlivened by an active intelligence, might convey, at first, chiefly the idea of good-nature and cleverness in the English sense; but her carriage, voice, movements, and expression in the more affecting moments of a drama, give sympathetic assurance of what we must be excused for calling—a crystal soul. In all her characters she transports us, at once, away from the commonplace and the artificial—if not always into the domain of lofty idealism, into that more human and blissful domain of primal nature; and unhappy is the being who finds not the unconscious delight of childhood, or the dream of love momentarily renewed in that serene and unclouded air.

In accordance with this view of Jenny Lind's characteristics, the enthusiasm she excited in England is alluded to by the leading critics as singularly honest. No musical artist, indeed, was ever so fitted to win Anglo-Saxon sympathies. She has the *morale* of the North; and does not awaken the prejudice so common in Great Britain, and so truly described in "Corinne," against the passionate temperament and tendency to extravagance that mark the children of the South. No candidate for public favour was ever so devoid of the ordinary means of attaining it. There is something absurd in making such a creature the mere nucleus of fashionable vanity, or the object of that namby-pamby criticism that busies itself with details of personal appearance and French terms of

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compliment. Jenny Lind is not beautiful; she does not take her audiences by storm; she exercises no intoxicating physical magnetism over their sensitive natures. She is not classic either in form or feature, or manner, or style of singing. Her loveliness as a woman, her power as an artist, her grace as a character, lies in expression; and that expression owes its variety and its enchantment to unaffected truth to nature, sentiment and the principles of art.

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THE SCEPTICAL GENIUS:

GIACOMO LEOPARDI.

PROVINCIAL life in Italy can scarcely be realized by an American except through observation. However remote from cities, or sequestered in location, may be a town in this country, if not connected with the great world by railroad and telegraph, the newspaper, the political representative, and an identity of feeling and action in some remote enterprise or interest, keep alive mutual sympathy and intelligence. But a moral and social as well as physical isolation belongs to the minor towns of the Italian peninsula. The quaint old stone houses enclose beings whose existence is essentially monastic, whose knowledge is far behind the times, and whose feelings are rigidly confined within the limits of family and neighbourhood. A more complete picture of still life in the nineteenth century, it is difficult to imagine, than many of these secluded towns present. The dilapidated air of the palaces, the sudden gloom of the

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narrow streets, as one turns into them from the square, where a group of idlers in tattered cloaks are ever engaged in a game or a gossip, the electrical effect of a travelling-carriage, or a troop of soldiers invading the quiet scene, at once inform even the casual visitor of the distance he is at from the spirit of the age. With the decayed air of the private houses, their worn brick floors and primitive furniture, contrast impressively the extensive and beautiful view usually obtainable from the highest windows, and the architectural magnificence of the church. We are constantly reminded that modern amelioration has not yet invaded the region; while the petty objects to which even the better class are devoted, the importance attached to the most frivolous details of life, the confined views and microscopic jealousies, or dilettante tastes that prevail, assure us that liberal curiosity and enlarged sympathy find but little scope in these haunts of a nation devoid of civil life, and thrust upon the past for mental nourishment.

It is, however, comparatively easy to imagine the influence of such an environment upon a superior intelligence. Recoiling from the attempt to find satisfaction in the external, thus repressed and deadened, the scholar would there naturally turn to written lore with a singular intensity of purpose; the aspirant would find little to tempt him from long and sustained flights into the ideal world; and the thinker would cling to abstract truth with an energy more fond and

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concentrated from the very absence of all motive and scope for action and utterance. It is thus that we account, in part, for the remarkable individuality and lonely career of Giacomo Leopardi, one of the greatest scholars and men of genius modern Italy has produced. He has left a glimpse of this monotonous and ungenial life in one of his poems—*La Vita Solitaria*:—

"La mattutina pioggia, allor che l'al
Battendo esulta nella chiusa stanza
Le gallinella ed al balcon s'affaccia
L'abitator de'campi, e il Sol che nasce
I suoi tremuli rai fra le cadenti
Stille saetta, alla capanna mia
Dolcemente picchiando, mi risveglia;
E sorgo, e i lievi nugoletti, e il primo
Degli augelli susurro, e l' aura fresca,
E le ridenti piagge benedico;
Poichè voi, cittadine infauste mura,
Vidi e conobbi assai, là dove segue
Odio al dolor compagno; e doloroso
Lo vivo, e tal morrò, deh tosto! Alcuna
Benche scarsa pietà pur mi dimostra
Natura in questi lochi, un giorno oh quanto
Verso me piu cortere."

Leopardi was the son of a count, whose estates are situated at Recanti, in the March of Ancona, and here his early youth was passed chiefly in his father's library, which consisted wholly of theological and classical books. After being taught Latin and the elements of philosophy by two priests, he seems to have been left to pursue his own course; and, at ten years old, he describes himself as having commenced a wild and desperate life of study, the result of which

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was a mastery of ancient classic and church literature, not only displayed in positive knowledge, but reproduced habitually in the form of translations and commentaries. Greek is not cultivated in Italy, and in this, as well as other branches of learning, he was quite isolated. In seven years his health was completely ruined by unremitted mental application. Niebuhr and Angelo Mai soon recognised him as a philologist of remarkable acumen and attainment; and laudatory articles in the French, German, and Holland journals, as well as complimentary letters from distinguished men, found their way to his secluded home. He duped scholars by tricks like those of Macpherson and Chatterton, in the pretended translations of an Hellenic fragment; he engaged in a literary correspondence with Monti and Gioberti; wrote able commentaries on the rhetoricians of the first and second centuries, annotations on the chronicle of Eusebius; invented new narratives of martyrdoms that passed for genuine; translated parts of the Odyssey, Epictetus, and Socrates; and, in fact, performed Herculean labours of research and criticism.

But the most remarkable feature of his life is the contrast between its profound scholarship and its domestic environment. During this period, Leopardi was treated like a child, kept at home by poverty, utterly destitute of companionship, except what he found in an occasional disputation with the Jews of Ancona; wretched in appearance, consumed by melan-

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choly, struggling with his father against the project to dedicate him to the church; without sympathy from his kind, or faith in his Creator, or joy in his youth, or hope in his destiny. He only found temporary solace when consciousness was absorbed in his studious vigils, in the solitary library of a forlorn palace in that secluded town. Such is an epitome of Leopardi's youth. Of his works thus produced, there are but few and imperfect copies, many being still unedited; and his peculiar genius would be faintly revealed to us, had it not found more direct and personal expression in a few sincere and highly finished original writings, which shadow forth and embody, with singular eloquence, the life and the nature of the man.

Leopardi was born at Recanti, on the twenty-ninth of June, 1798, and died at Naples, on the fourteenth of June, 1837. The restraint under which he lived, partly that of circumstances, and partly of authority, both exerted upon a morbidly sensitive and lonely being, kept him in his provincial birthplace until the age of twenty-four. After this period he sought a precarious subsistence in Rome, Florence, Bologna, and Naples. Of the conscious aim he proposed to himself as a scholar, we may judge by his own early declaration: "Mediocrity frightens me: my wish is to love and become great by genius and study." In regard to the first desire, he seems, either from an unfortunate personal appearance, or from having been in contact with the insincere and the vain, to have experienced a bitter

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disappointment; for the craving for sympathy, and the praise of love continually find expression in his writings, while he says of women, "L'ambizione, l'interesso, la perfidia, l'insensibilità delle donne che io definisco un animale sensa cuore, sono cose che mi spaventano." He translated with great zest, the satire of Samonides on women. Elsewhere, however, there is evinced a remarkable sensibility to female attractions, and indications appear of gratified, though interrupted affinities. Indeed, we cannot but perceive that Leopardi belongs to that rare class of men whose great sense of beauty and "necessity of loving" is united with an equal passion for truth. It was not, therefore, because his taste was too refined, or his standard too ideal, that his affections were baffled, but on account of the extreme rarity of that sacred union of loveliness and loyalty, of grace and candour, of the beautiful and the true, which, to the thinker and the man of heart, alone justifies the earnestness of love.

Nature vindicated herself, as she ever will, even in his courageous attempt to merge all youthful impulse in the pursuit of knowledge, and twine around abstract truth the clinging sensibilities that covet a human object. He became, indeed, a master of lore, he lived a scholar, he kept apart from the multitude, and enacted the stoical thinker; but the ungratified portion of his soul bewailed her bereavement; from his harvest-fields of learning went up the cry of famine; a melancholy tone blended with his most

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triumphant expositions; and an irony, that ill conceals moral need, underlies his most vivacious utterance.

In his actual life, Leopardi confesses himself to have been greatly influenced by prudential motives. There was a reserve in his family intercourse, which doubtless tended to excite his thoughts and feelings to a greater private scope; and he accordingly sought in fancy and reflection a more bold expansion. His scepticism has been greatly lamented as the chief source of his hopelessness; and the Jesuits even ventured to assert his final conversion, so important did they regard the accession of such a gifted name to the roll of the church; but his friend, Ranieri, in whose arms he died, only tells us that he "resigned his exalted spirit with a smile." He presents another instance of the futility of attempting to graft religious belief externally, and by prescriptive means, upon a free, inquiring, and enthusiastic mind. Christianity, as practically made known to Leopardi, failed to enlist his sympathies, from the erroneous form in which it was revealed, while, speculatively, its authority seemed to have no higher sanction than the antique philosophy and fables with which he was conversant. Had he learned to consider religion as a sentiment, inevitable and divine; had he realized it in the same way as he did love—as an experience, a feeling, a principle of the soul, and not a technical system, it would have yielded him both comfort and inspiration.

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Deformed, with the seeds of decay in his very frame, familiar with the history, the philosophy, the languages, of the earth, reflective and susceptible, loving and lonely, erudite, but without a faith, young in years, but venerable in mental life, he found nothing, in the age of transition in which he lived, to fix and harmonize his nature. His parent was incapable of comprehending the mind he sought to control. Sympathy with Greece and Rome, compassion for Italy and despair of himself, were the bitter fruits of knowledge unillumined by supernal trust. He says the *inesplicabile mistero dell 'universo* weighed upon his soul. He longed to solve the problem of life, and tried to believe, with Byron, that "everything is naught"—*tutto é nulla;* and wrote *la calamità é la sola cosa che vi convenga essendo virtuoso. Nostra vita*, he asks, *che val? solo a spregiarla.* He thought too much to be happy without a centre of light about which his meditations could hopefully revolve; he felt too much to be tranquil without some reliable and endeared object to which he might confidently turn for solace and recognition. The facts of his existence are meagre; the circle of his experience limited, and his achievements as a scholar give us no clue to his inward life; but the two concise volumes of prose and verse are a genuine legacy; a reflection of himself amply illustrative to the discriminating reader.

As regards the diction of Leopardi, it partakes of the superiority of his mind and the individuality of his

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character. Versed, as he was, both in the vocabulary and the philosophy of ancient and modern languages, he cherished the highest appreciation of his native tongue, of which he said it was *sempre infinita*. He wrote slowly, and with great care. In poetry, his first conception was noted, at once, and born in an access of fervour; but he was employed, at intervals, for weeks, in giving the finishing touches to the shortest piece. It is, indeed, evident that Leopardi gave to his deliberate compositions the essence, as it were, of his life. No one would imagine his poems, except from their lofty and artistic style, to be the effusions of a great scholar, so simple, true, and apparently unavoidable are the feelings they embody. It is this union of severe discipline and great erudition with the glow, the directness, and the natural sentiment of a young poet, that constitutes the distinction of Leopardi. The reflective power, and the predominance of the thoughtful element in his writings, assimilate him rather with German and English than modern Italian literature. There is nothing desultory and superficial; vigour of thought, breadth and accuracy of knowledge, and the most serious feeling characterize his works.

His taste was manly, and formed altogether on the higher models; in terse energy he often resembles Dante; in tender and pensive sentiment, Petrarch; in philosophical tone, he manifested the Anglo-Saxon spirit of inquiry and psychological tendency of Bacon

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and Coleridge; thus singularly combining the poetic and the erudite, gay research and fanciful speculation, grave wisdom and exuberant love. Of late Italian writers, perhaps no one more truly revives the romantic associations of her literature; for Leopardi "learned in suffering what he taught in song," as exclusively as the "grim Tuscan" who described the world of spirit; his life was shadowed by a melancholy not less pervading than that of Tasso; and, since Laura's bard, no poet of the race has sung of love with a more earnest beauty. He has been well said to have passed a "life of thought with sorrow beside him." The efflorescence of that life is concentrated in his verse, comparatively limited in quantity, but proportionally intense in expression; and the views, impressions, fancies, and ideas generated by his studies and experience, we may gather from his prose, equally concise in form and individual in spirit. From these authentic sources, we will now endeavour to infer the characteristics of his genius.

His faith, or rather his want of faith, in life and human destiny, is clearly betrayed in his legend, or allegory, called *Storia del Genere Umano*. According to this fable, Jove created the world infinitely less perfect than it now exists, with obvious limits, undiversified by water and mountains; and over it man roved without impediment, childlike, truthful, and living wholly in the immediate. Upon emerging from this adolescent condition, however, the race, wearied by the monotony

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and obvious bounds to their power and enjoyment, grew dissatisfied. Satiety took the place of contentment, and many grew desperate, loathing the existence in which they originally rejoiced. This insensibility to the gifts of the gods was remedied by introducing the elements of diversity and suggestiveness into the face of nature and the significance of life. The night was made brilliant by stars; mountains and valleys alternated in the landscape; the atmosphere, from a fixed aspect, became nebulous and crystalline by turns. Nature, instead of ministering only to vitality and instinctive enjoyment, was so arranged and developed as constantly to excite imagination and act upon sympathy. Echo was born, at this time, to startle with mysterious responses; and dreams first invaded the domain of sleep, to prolong the illusive agencies thus instituted to render human life more tolerable.

By these means, Jove awakened to consciousness the soul, and increased the charities and the grace of existence through a sense of the grand and beautiful. This epoch was of longer duration than that which preceded it; and the weary and hackneyed spirits once more realized enjoyment in experiencing the same vivid impressions and zest of being which had marked the primitive era. But, at length, this warfare between the real and ideal, this successive interchange of charming delusion and stern fact that made up existence, wore upon the moral energies, and so fatigued the spirits of men, that it gave rise to the custom, once

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prevalent among our progenitors, of celebrating as a festival the death of friends. Impiety was the final result of this period in the history of the race. Life became perverted, and human nature shorn of its original beauty. This fallen condition the gods punished by the flood of Deucalion. Admonished to repair the solitude of the earth, he and Pyrrha, though disdainful of life, obeyed the command, and threw stones behind them to restore the species. Jove, admonished by the past of the essential nature of man, that it is impossible for him, like other animals, to live happily in a state of freedom from evil, always desiring the impossible, considered by what new arts it was practicable to keep alive the unhappy race. These he decided were—first, to mingle in his life real evils, and then to engage him in a thousand avocations and labours, in order to divert him as much as possible from communing with his own nature, or, at least, with the desire of the unattained. He, therefore, sent abroad many diseases and misfortunes, wishing, by the vicissitudes of mortal life, to obviate satiety, and increase, by the presence of evil, the relish of good—to soften the ferocity of man, to reduce his power, and lead him to succumb to necessity, and to temper the ardour of his desires.

Besides such benefits, he knew that, when there is room for hope, the unhappy are less inclined to do violence to themselves, and that the gloom of disaster thus illumined is endurable. Accordingly, he created

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tempests, armed them with thunder and lightning, gave Neptune his trident, whirled comets into space, and ordained eclipses. By these, and other terrible phases of the elements, he desired to excite a wholesome awe, knowing that the presence of danger will reconcile to life, for a time at least, not only the unhappy, but those who most abominate it. To exclude the previous satiety, he induced in mankind appetites for new gratifications, not to be obtained without toil; and whereas, before the flood, water, herbs, and fruit sufficed for nourishment, now food and drink of great variety and elaborate preparation became a necessity; until then, the equality of temperature rendered clothing useless, the inclemency of the weather now made it indispensable.

He ordered Mercury to found the first city, and divide the race into nations, tongues, and people, sowing discord among them. Thus laws were originated and civil life instituted. He then sent among men certain sentiments, or superhuman phantasms of most excellent semblance, such as Justice, Virtue, Glory, and Patriotism, to mould, quicken, and elevate society. The fruit of this revolution was admirable. Notwithstanding the fatigues, alarms, and griefs previously unknown to our race, it excelled, in sweetness and convenience, its state before the deluge; and this effect was owing mainly to the phantasms or ideas before alluded to, which inspired poets and artists to the highest efforts, and to which many

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cheerfully sacrificed their lives. This greatly pleased Jove, who justly thought that men would value life in proportion as they were disposed to yield it in a noble cause. Indeed, this order of things, even when superseded after many centuries, retained its supremacy so well that, up to a time not very distant from the present, the maxims founded upon it were in vogue.

Again, the insatiable desires of man alienated him from the will of the gods. Unsatisfied with the scope given to imaginative enjoyment, he now pleaded for Truth. This unreasonable exaction angered Jupiter, who, however, determined to punish importunity by granting the demand. To the remonstrances of the other deities, he replied by describing the consequences of the gift. It will, he assured them, destroy many of the attractive illusions of life, disenchant perception, and for ever chasten the fervour of desire; for Truth is not to mortals what she is to divinities; she makes clear the beatitude of the one, but the misery of the other, by revealing the conditions of their fate, the precarious nature of their enjoyments, and the deceptive character of human pursuits. The long-sought blessing thus proved to the multitude a bane; for, in this new order of things, the semblance of the infinite no longer yielded satisfaction, but aggravated the soul, created weariness, longing, and aspiration. Under the dominion of Truth, universality supervened among men, landmarks lost their distinctness, nations inter-

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mingled, and the motives to earnest love or hate became few and tame; life thus gradually lost its original interest and significance to human consciousness, and its essential value was so greatly diminished as to awaken the pity of the gods at the forlorn destiny of the race.

Jove heard their intercession benignly, and consented to the prayer of Love that she might descend to the earth. The gentle daughter of the celestial Venus thus preserved the only vestige of the ancient nobility of man. Often before had men imagined that she dwelt among them; but it was only her counterfeit. Not until humanity came under the dominion of Truth, did Love actually vouchsafe her genuine presence, and then only for a time, for she could not be long spared from Heaven. So unworthy had mankind become, that few hearts were found fit to receive the angelic guest, and these she filled with such noble and sweet emotions, such high and consistent moral energy, as to revive in them the life of the beatific era. This state, when realized, so nearly approached the divine, that Jove permitted it to but few, and at long intervals. By this means, however, the grand primeval sentiments were kept in relation with man, the original sacred fire remained unextinguished, and the glorious imaginings and tender charms of humanity yet lingered to nourish a sublime faith and infinite hope. The majority, however, con-

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tinued insensible to this redeeming element, and profaned and ignorantly repudiated it; yet it ceased not to hallow, exalt, and refine the weary, sated, and baffled soul of man.

Such is a meagre outline of the allegory which shadows forth Leopardi's views of life. It would appear that he recognized no sign of promise in the firmament of existence, radiant as it was to his vision with the starry light of knowledge, but the rainbow of love, upon which angels seemed to ascend and descend—the one glowing link between earth and sky, the bridge spanning the gulf of time, the arc made up of the tears of earth and the light of heaven.

In a note to this fable, he protests against having had any design to run a philosophical tilt against either the Mosaic tradition or the evangelists; but it is evident that he did aim to utter the convictions which his own meditations and personal experience had engendered. Nor is the view thus given of the significance and far-reaching associations of human love, when consecrated by sentiment and intensified by intelligence, so peculiar as might appear from his manner of presenting it. In Plato, Dante, and Petrarch, in all the higher order of poets and philosophers, we find a divine and enduring principle recognized under the same guise. The language in which Leopardi expresses his faith on the subject is

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not less emphatic than graceful: "Qualora viene in sulla terra, sceglie i cuori piu teneri e piu gentili delle persone piu generose e magnanime; e quivi siede per alcun breve spazio; diffondendovi sì pellegrina e mirabile soavità, ed empiendoli di affetti sì nobili, e di tanta virtù e fortezza, che eglino allora provano, cosa al tutto nuova nel genere umano, pinttosto verità che rassomiglianza di beatitudine."

The satire of Leopardi is pensive rather than bitter; it is aimed at general, not special error, and seems inspired far more by the sad conviction of a serious mind than the acerbity of a disappointed one. In the dialogue between Fashion and Death, the former argues a near relationship and almost identity of purpose with the latter; and the folly and unwholesome effects of subservience to custom are finely satirised, in naively showing how the habit she induces tends to shorten life and multiply the victims of disease. So in the proposal of premiums by an imaginary academy, the mechanical spirit of the age is wittily rebuked by the offer of prizes to the inventor of a machine to enact the office of a friend, without the alloy of selfishness and disloyalty which usually mars the perfection of that character in its human form. Another prize is offered for a machine that will enact magnanimity, and another for one that will produce women of unperverted conjugal instincts. The imaginary conversation between a

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sprite and a gnome is a capital rebuke to self-love; and that between Malambruno and Farfarello emphatically indicates the impossibility of obtaining happiness through will, or the agency even of superior intelligence. Leopardi's hopelessness is clearly shown in the dialogue of Nature and a Soul, wherein the latter refuses the great endowments offered because of the inevitable attendant suffering. In the Earth and Moon's interview, we have an ingenious satire upon that shallow philosophy which denies all the data of truth from individual consciousness and personal experience.

One of the most quaint and instructive of these colloquies is that between Federico Ruysch and his mummies, in which the popular notion of the pain of dying is refuted by the alleged proof of experience. The mummies, in their midnight song, declare the condition of death to be *lieta no ma sicura*. Physiologically considered, all pleasure is declared to be attended with a certain languor: Burke suggests the same idea in reference to the metaphysical effects of beauty on the nervous system; and this agreeable state is referred to by the mummies to give their inquisitive owner an idea of the sensation of dying. The philosophy of this subject, the vague and superstitious fears respecting it, have recently engaged the attention of popular medical writers; but the essential points are clearly unfolded in this little dialogue of Leopardi.

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In his essay entitled *Detti Memorabili di Filippo Ottonieri*, we have apparently an epitome of his own creed; at least, the affinity between the maxims and habits here described and those which, in other instances, he acknowledges as personal, is quite obvious. Ottonieri is portrayed as a man isolated in mind and sympathies, though dwelling among his kind. He thought that the degree in which individuality of life and opinion in man was regarded as eccentric, might be deemed a just standard of civilization; as, the more enlightened and refined the state of society, the more such originality was respected and regarded as natural. He is described as ironical; but the reason for this was, that he was deformed and unattractive in person, like Socrates, yet created to love; and, not being able to win this highest gratification, so conversed as to inspire both fear and esteem. He cultivated wisdom, and tried to console himself with friendship; moreover, his irony was not *sdognosa ed acerba, ma riposata e dolce.*

He was of opinion that the greatest delights of existence are illusions, and that children find everything in nothing, and adults nothing in everything. He compared pleasure to odours which usually promised a satisfaction unrealized by taste; and said, of some nectar-drinking bees, that they were blest in not understanding their own happiness. He remarked that want of consideration occasioned far more suffering than positive and intentional cruelty,

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and that one who lived a gregarious life would utter himself aloud when alone, if a fly bit him; but one accustomed to solitude and inward life would often be silent in company, though threatened with a stroke of apoplexy. He divided mankind into two classes, those whose characters and instincts are overlaid and moulded by conformity and conventionalism, and those whose natures are so rich or so strong as to assert themselves intact and habitually. He declared that, in this age, it was impossible for any one to love without a rival; for the egotist usually combined with and struggled for supremacy against the lover in each individual. He considered delusion a requisite of all human enjoyment, and thought that man, like the child who, from a sweet-rimmed chalice imbibed the medicine, according to Tasso's simile, *e dal' inganuno sus vita riceve.* In these, and many other ideas attributed to Ottonieri, we recognize the tone of feeling and the experience of Leopardi; and the epitaph with which it concludes breathes of the same melancholy, but intelligent and aspiring nature: "*Nato alle opere virtuose e alla gloria, vissuto ozioso e disutile, e morto sensa fama non ignaro della natura nè della fortuna sua.*"

The *Wager of Prometheus* is a satire upon civilization, in which a cannibal feast, a Hindoo widow's sacrifice, and a suicide in London, are brought into vivid and graphic contrast. To exhibit the fallacy

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which estimates life, merely as such, a blessing, and to show that it consists in sensitive and moral experience rather than in duration, as colour is derived from light and not from the objects of which it is but a quality, he gives us an animated and discriminating argument between a metaphysician and a materialist; and in illustration of the absolute mental nature of happiness when closely analyzed he takes us to the cell of Tasso, where a most characteristic and suggestive discussion takes place between him and his familiar genius. The tyranny of Nature, her universal and inevitable laws, unredeemed, to Leopardi's view, by any compensatory spiritual principle, is displayed in an interview between her and one of her discontented subjects, wherein she declares man's felicity an object of entire indifference; her arrangements having for their end only, the preservation of the universe by a constant succession of destruction and renovation.

His literary creed is emphatically recorded in the little treatise on *Parini o vero della Gloria;* and it exhibits him as a true nobleman in letters, although the characteristic sadness of his mind is evident in his severe estimate of the obstacles which interfere with the recognition of an original and earnest writer; for to this result, rather than fame, his argument is directed. As a vocation, he considers authorship unsatisfactory, on account of its usual

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effect, when sedulously pursued, upon the animal economy; he justly deems the capacity to understand and sympathize with a great writer extremely rare; the pre-occupation of society in the immediate and the personal, the inundation of books in modern times, the influence of prejudice, ignorance, and narrowness of mind, the lack of generous souls, mental satiety, frivolous tastes, decadence of enthusiasm and vigour in age, and impatient expectancy in youth—are among the many and constant obstacles against which the individual who appeals to his race through books has to contend. He also dwells upon the extraordinary influence of prescriptive opinion, wedded to a few antique examples, upon the literary taste of the age. He considers the secret power of genius, in literature, to exist in an indefinable charm of style almost as rarely appreciated as it is exercised; and he thinks great writing only an inevitable substitute for great action—the development of the heroic, the beautiful, and the true in language, opinion, and sentiment, which under propitious circumstances, would have been embodied, with yet greater zeal, in deeds. He thus views the art in which he excelled, in its most disinterested and noblest relations.

There is great naturalness, and a philosophic tone, in the interview between Columbus and one of his companions, as they approach the New World.

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In the *Eulogy on Birds*, it is touching to perceive the keen appreciation Leopardi had of the joyous side of life, his complete recognition of it as a phase of nature, and his apparent unconsciousness of it as a state of feeling. The blithe habits of the feathered creation, their vivacity, motive power, and jocund strains, elicit as loving a commentary as Audubon or Wilson ever penned; but they are described only to be contrasted with the hollow and evanescent smiles of his own species; and the brief illusions they enjoy are pronounced more desirable than those of such singers as Dante and Tasso, to whom imagination was a *funestissima dote, e principio di sollecitudini, e angosce gravissime e perpetue.* With the tokens of his rare intelligence and sensibility before us, it is affecting to read his wish to be converted into a bird, in order to experience awhile their contentment and joy.

The form of these writings is peculiar. We know of no English prose work at all similar, except the Imaginary Conversations of Landor, and a few inferior attempts of a like character; but there is one striking distinction between Leopardi and his classic English prototype: the former's aim is always to reproduce the opinions and modes of expression of his characters, while the latter chiefly gives utterance to his own. This disguise was adopted, we imagine, in a degree, from prudential motives.

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Conscious of sentiments at variance with the accepted creed, both in religion and philosophy, the young Italian recluse summoned historical personages, whose memories were hallowed to the imagination, and whose names were associated with the past, and, through their imaginary dialogues, revealed his own fancies, meditations, and emotions. In fact, a want of sympathy with the age is one of the prominent traits of his mind. He was sceptical in regard to the alleged progress of the race, had little faith in the wisdom of newspapers, and doubted the love of truth for her own sake, as the master principle of modern science and literature. Everywhere he lauds the negative. Ignorance is always bliss, and sleep, that "knits up the ravell'd sleeve of care," the most desirable blessing enjoyed by mortals. He scorns compromise with evil, and feels it is "nobler in the mind to suffer" than to reconcile itself to error and pain through cowardice, illusion, or stupidity. He writes to solace himself by expression; and he writes in a satirical and humorous vein, because it is less annoying to others and more manly in itself than wailing in despair. Thus, Leopardi's misanthropy differs from that of Rousseau and Byron in being more intellectual; it springs not so much from exasperated feeling as from the habitual contemplation of painful truth. Philosophy is rather an available medicament to him than an ultimate good.

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Patriotism, learning, despair, and love are expressed in Leopardi's verse with emphatic beauty. There is an antique grandeur, a solemn wail, in his allusions to his country, which stirs, and, at the same time, melts the heart. This sad, yet noble melody is quite untranslatable; and we must content ourselves with an earnest reference to some of these eloquent and finished lyrical strains. How grand, simple, and pathetic is the opening of the first, *Al' Italia*:—

"O patria mia, vedo le mura e gli archi
E le colonne e i simulacri e l'erme
Torri degli avi nostri,
Ma la gloria non vedo,
Non vedo il lauro e il ferro ond'éran carchi
I nostri padri antichi. Or fatta inerme
Nuda la fronte e nudo il petto mostri.
Oimè quante ferite,
Che lividor, che sangue! oh qual ti veggio,
Formosisiima donna! Io chiedo al cielo
E al mondo: dite, dite,
Chi la ridusse a tale? E questo é peggio,
Che di catene ha carche ambe le braccia,
Sì che sparte le chiome e senza velo
Siede in terra negletta e sconsalata,
Nascondendo la faccia
Tra le ginocchia, e piange."

In the same spirit are the lines on the *Monument to Dante*, to whom he says—

"Beato te che il fato
A viver non danno fra tanto orrore;
Che non vedesti in braccio
L'itala moglie a barbaro soldato.

* * * * *

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Non si conviene a sì corrotta usanza
Questa d 'animi eccelsi altrice a scola:
Se di codardi é stanza,
Meglio l'è rimaner vedova e sola."

The poem to Angelo Mai, on his discovery of the Republic of Cicero, is of kindred tone—the scholar's triumph blending with the patriot's grief. An identical vein of feeling also we recognize, under another form, in the poem written for his sister's nuptials. Bitterly he depicts the fate of woman in a country where

"Virtù viva sprezziam, lodiamo estinta;"

and declares—

"O miseri o codardi
Figluioli avrai. Miseri eleggi. Immenso
Tra fortuna e valor dissidio pose
Il corrotto costume. Ahi troppo tardi,
E nella sera dell 'umane cose,
Acquista oggi chi nasce il moto e il senso."

Bruto Minore is vigorous in conception and exquisitely modulated. In the hymn to the Patriarchs, *La Primavera, Il Sabato del Vilaggio, Alla Luna, Il Passaro Solitaria, Il Canto notturno d' un Pastore errante in Asia*, and other poems, Leopardi not only gives true descriptive hints, with tact and fidelity, but reproduces the sentiment of the hour, or the scene he celebrates, breathing into his verse the latent music they awaken in the depth of thought and sensibility; the rhythm, the words, the imagery, all combine to produce this

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result, in a way analogous to that by which great composers harmonize sound, or the masters of landscape blend colours, giving birth to the magical effect which, under the name of tone, constitutes the vital principle of such emanations of genius.

But not only in exalted patriotic sentiment and graphic portraiture, nor even in artistic skill, resides all the individuality of Leopardi as a poet. His tenderness is as sincere as it is manly. There is an indescribable sadness native to his soul, quite removed from acrid gloom or weak sensibility. We have already traced it in his opinions and in his life; but its most affecting and impressive expression is revealed in his poetry. *Il Primo Amore*, *La Sera del Dì di Festa*, *Il Risorgimento*, and other effusions, in a similar vein, are instinct with this deep, yet attractive melancholy, the offspring of profound thought and emotion. "*Uscir di pena*," he sadly declares, "*é diletto fra noi; non brillin gli ochi se non di pianto; due cose belle ha il mondo: amore e morto.*" In that most characteristic poem, *Amore e Morte*, he speaks of the maiden who *la gentilezza del morir comprende*:—

"Quando novellamente
Nasce nel cor profondo
Un amoroso affetto,
Languido e stanco insiem con esso in petto
Un desiderio di morir si sentè:
Come, non so: ma tale
D' amor vero e possente é il primo effetto;

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Forsei gli occhi spaura
Allor questo deserto: a se la terra
Forse il mortale inabitabil fatta
Vede omai senza quella
Nova, sola, infinita
Felicità che il suo pensier figura;
Ma per cagiondi lui grave procella
Presentendo il suo cor, brama quiete,
Brama raccorsi in porto
Dinanzi a fier désio,
Che già rugghiando, intorno, intorno oscura."

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THE PAINTER OF CHARACTER:

SIR DAVID WILKIE.

THE characteristic is an essential principle of art, and one that is never attained without original ability, and then rarely managed with tact. It possesses singular attraction, in modern times, from the uniformity of manners, induced by high civilization. The peculiar zest with which an epicure enjoys game, and a naturalist or poet explores a primeval and uninvaded scene, is experienced, in a degree, by every vigorous and healthful mind in finding the characteristic effectively depicted in literature and art, or individualized in society. The interest awakened by the advent of a "lion" in the circles of Edinburgh, London, or Paris; the pleasure with which we encounter, in travel, a sequestered village, where the language, costume or habits of the people have retained their individuality; and the earnest praise we lavish upon the author who succeeds in creating a fresh, consistent, and memorable character, are

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familiar evidences of the natural love of what is characteristic as an element of universal taste. Yet this obvious truth has been comparatively seldom acknowledged and rarely acted upon. Conformity to a classical type, the dominion of a prescriptive standard of taste, and the tyranny of fashion, have combined to elevate imitation above originality; and genius, of a high and energetic kind, has alone proved adequate to obtain recognition for the latter.

Shakspeare gave it sanction and nurture in England, and to him we ascribe, in no small measure, the bold individuality of achievement and taste, so remarkable in the history of art and letters in Great Britain. It is this which accounts for the otherwise anomalous taste that unites such opposite extremes of appreciation as Walpole, and Gray, with Burns, Crabbe, and Dickens, in literature; and in art, Turner, West, and Lawrence, with Moreland, Hogarth, and Wilkie. There exists, indeed, an interminable dispute between the votaries of the classic and the characteristic; only by slow degrees and most unwillingly do the votaries of the former yield their ground; accustomed to look at nature through the lens of antiquity, they dislike to admit that she can be directly viewed, that her features may be seized and embodied, and her spirit infused, without the intervention of that style, which the miracles of ancient art have consecrated. But when an original artist perfects himself in the details of this

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culture, as a means of expression, and then uses it to illustrate nature and manners as they actually exist, these devotees of antiquity are somewhat bewildered. In such a case, the charge of ignorance or vulgarity is inadmissible. The execution proves high knowledge and acquaintance with standard models; but the familiarity of the subjects chosen, and the fact that, instead of beauty according to the abstract classical idea, nature in her characteristic significance, is the essence of the work, disturbs the artistic creed of these ultra conservatives. The delight which all classes take in the sight of these adventurous efforts, the instant and genuine sympathy they awaken, and the extraordinary power they unquestionably display, "puzzle the will" of the elegant representatives of classicism; and they can only reiterate the arguments adduced in the old controversy in regard to the Shakspearian and Racine Drama; or have the magnanimity to acknowledge that the sphere of art is infinitely more extensive and versatile than they had imagined, and cannot be limited by any theory which a single touch of genius may for ever annihilate.

The career of Wilkie affords, perhaps, the most striking and certainly the most interesting illustration of these views. He began to be an artist from instinct, and seldom has the tendency been less modified by adventitious influences. Excepting a print of a Highland Chief sent to his father's manse, the exercise of the artistic faculty was not even suggested

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to him by any visible example of its results; yet, on the floors and walls of his boyhood's frugal home, on the smooth stones of the field, on the sand of the brook-side, and on his slate at school, he continually sketched human faces, animals, and every picturesque object that caught his eye; no sooner was the visitor's back turned, than something, so near a likeness that it was immediately recognized, appeared in chalk or charcoal; groups of schoolboys surrounded his desk for "counterfeit presentments;" he preferred to cover the margin of the page with designs, to committing its text to memory; and to stand, with his hands in his pockets, and mark the pictures his comrades unconsciously made at their sports, to engaging in them himself; and it was his boast that he could draw before he knew how to read, and paint before he could spell.

That love of the characteristic was his chief inspiration, while thus spontaneously exercising the language of art, is evident from the subjects he chose and the kind of observation in which he delighted. His improvised drawings usually aimed at a great significance or whimsicality; mere imitation of uninteresting objects he abjured. On his way to school he loitered to sketch a gipsy wife or a maimed soldier, a limping sailor or a mendicant fiddler, and to observe groups of ploughmen; while it is remembered of him that his attention was often absorbed in watching a sunbeam on the wall, and the *chiaro 'scuro* effect of a

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smithy at night. He courted the society of good story-tellers, and displayed under a demure exterior, the keenest relish of drollery and mischief. Like the Duke of Argyle, his heart "warmed to the tartan"—though for its picturesque rather than its patriotic associations; and the two memorable experiences of his boyhood were the sight of the sea and a review of cavalry. Nerved by habits of simplicity, and practised in the observation of nature,—sagacious, honest, candid, and poor, but wholly inexperienced in the technicalities and refinements of art—with this native sense of the characteristic, and a decided genius for embodying it, he left the manse of Cults, at the age of fourteen, to study art in Edinburgh.

Habits of incessant application, and a resolution to proceed intelligently, and never, by obscure steps, according to his fellow pupils, distinguished him at the Trustees' Academy. He would not copy the foot or hand of an ancient statue without first knowing its law of expression, and accounting scientifically for the position of each muscle; he was thorough and constant, and therefore made visible progress in facility and correctness of drawing. He took a prize in a few months, and the intervals of his practice were given to his favourite sphere of observation; ever in pursuit of character, he frequented trysts, fairs and market-places. David Allan, a kind of Scotch Teniers, was the only precursor of Wilkie that seems to have proved suggestive; they had a natural vein in com-

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mon, though essentially different; and these appear to have been the exclusive sources of his early education in art.

An imperturbable good nature and love of quiet fun, endeared Wilkie to his comrades; but his form grew thin and his cheek pale, from the life of assiduous routine that filled the cycle of his youth; anxious not to invade, more than necessity compelled, the narrow resources of his family, he earnestly sought that command of art that would enable him to render it lucrative: and on his return home, he began at once to seek, and permanently represent, the characteristic phases of life and manners in his native district, where, in boyhood, he had grown familiar with them, and whither he had returned with power to do justice to his conceptions.

The history of his first attempt in the peculiar sphere for which nature so obviously adapted him, is one of those pleasing and impressive episodes in the uneventful career of genius, which confirm our faith in its natural resources and inevitable destiny. With an old chest of drawers for an easel, and a herd-boy for a lay-figure, he began to put upon canvas a village fair. The scene of the picture was the adjacent hamlet of Pitteslie, the site of which, and its local features, he first carefully sketched; his groups and figures were gleaned on a market-day, and consisted of old women and bonnie lassies, venders of poultry, shoes, eggs, and candy, a travelling auctioneer, a ballad-singer, a gaily-decked recruiting sergeant,

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and the grave forms of ministers and elders; these portraits he transferred to a blank leaf of his Bible from the unconscious congregation at the kirk. Thus directly from life and nature every trait of the picture was derived. Its variety of character and dramatic style charmed the uninitiated, and the impressive originality of its conception won the favour of tasteful and unprejudiced observers. The number of the latter, however, was too limited at home for him to expect there the encouragement he needed; and while he made studies in the vicinity which proved of great future use, and sketched outlines of village and rustic life which proved the bases of many subsequent triumphs, his chief resource in Scotland was portrait painting.

With the gains of several months' labour in this field, and means cheerfully advanced by his father and neighbours to the best of their slender ability, he went to London, like many an adventurous genius, with a gift of nature to develop, upon the recognition of which his prosperity wholly depended. We may imagine the feelings of the sagacious but demure young Scot, as he exchanged the familiar landscape of moor and mountain for the English coast, the ship-covered Thames, and the smoky canopy of London. Undaunted by the multitudinous life around him, with a modest but determined soul, he isolated himself, and patiently toiled. For nine long months he lived in humble lodgings, dined for thirteen pence a day, drew from his own limbs as models, and

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blacked his own shoes for economy. Illness as well as poverty beset him, but his studies at the academy, his observations in the streets, and his labour at the easel, were unremitted. He placed his pictures in a shop-window, and groups would cluster round and enjoy them; they found ready purchasers at six guineas each, but distrust of their own taste prevented many from acknowledging the merit they could not but feel; and Wilkie corresponded with his father on the subject of returning to the manse and renouncing his dream of metropolitan success.

True to his domestic attachments, he sought, with his first earnings, to procure a piano forte for his sister; and at the shop of a distinguished manufacturer he excited curiosity, which led to an examination of his portfolio, and, at length, to the exhibition of Pitteslie Fair to the Countess of Mansfield—a patroness of the instrument-maker. Lord Mansfield ordered a picture of Wilkie, selecting his sketch of "The Village Politician" as the subject. The first idea of this work seems to have arisen from a popular ballad, but the excitement of the French revolution, as it operated in rural districts upon the village gossips, over the ale-house Gazette, rendered it an epitome of the times; while in its details, as in the former instance, the painter followed nature with graphic authenticity.

An incidental discussion between several artists of distinction, which resulted in a visit to Wilkie's humble studio, contributed, at the same moment, to draw attention to his merits; and the exhibition of the "Village

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Politician" at the Royal Academy, was an epoch in the history of English Art. Although Lord Mansfield, in his pecuniary arrangement with Wilkie, did not emulate the liberality for which patrons of art are renowned in Great Britain, yet the artist's manly behaviour on the occasion, and the fame of the picture, had the immediate effect of establishing him in public estimation. Thenceforth his reputation was fixed as an original painter; in him the characteristic found its legitimate exponent; and although Northcote sneered at his subjects as belonging to the "pauper school," and Haydon, in his admiration of the grand style, disputed with him as to the claims of his sphere of art, he calmly pursued his course; and the Auroras and Calypsos of the exhibition were neglected, in their artificial beauty, while the iron-railing about Wilkie's homely, but true and natural creations, was constantly surrounded by eager throngs of all classes, whose looks of wonder, mirth, or tenderness, bore witness to their genuine emotion.

The effect of Wilkie's success upon the people of his native place, formed a striking contrast to their original misgivings as to his career. The ominous shake of the head with which the narrow but worthy presbyters had listened to what they deemed his profane intent, gave place to the reluctant confession that he was an ingenious lad; the old villagers, who had been most offended at finding their respectable faces transferred to the picture of a Fair without their knowledge and consent, now

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called at the manse, to thank the young artist for the enduring honour bestowed by his miraculous pencil; the rustic satirist who had declared of one of his early sketches that it was more like a flounder than a foot, was now voted a simpleton; and the old dame whose prophecy of the boy David, that he would live to be knighted, had been ridiculed, now won quite a reputation for second-sight, especially as the prediction was soon literally fulfilled.

Next to the patronage secured by his fame, its most valuable result was social advancement. He immediately gained the friendship and confidence, and, in many instances, the habitual society of the leading men of rank, genius, and character in the kingdom, and preserved the benefit first obtained through artistic genius, by his rich humour, unalloyed simplicity, and candid good nature. Indeed, no better evidence of the solid nature of Wilkie's gifts and acquirements could be afforded, than that shown in the manner of receiving what has been justly called "this gust of fame." His enthusiasm remained calm as before, his habits of application unchanged, his assiduity in the study and representation of the characteristic increased; he seemed only confirmed by the public response to his aspirations in their essential truth and efficacy; no symptom of elation appeared; and it soon became evident to all that Wilkie's modesty was equal to his originality.

It is impossible to follow his subsequent career,

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without acknowledging the peculiar value of individual patronage to the cause of art. We have seen that long and careful observation, repeated experiment, and patient study, are essential to the production of such works as those adapted to his genius; to toil thus upon a doubtful subject, to create instead of ministering to taste of this kind, or to sacrifice a sphere so original and attractive for portrait painting, are equally undesirable alternatives; it is needful that the artist should be cheered by a reliable destination for his work, that he should devote himself to it with confidence and a spirit of freedom, hope, and self-possession, such as can never be realized when the disposition and recompense of this labour is wholly precarious.

Accordingly we deem Wilkie's successive admirable efforts the legitimate fruits of tasteful individual encouragement; the commission of Lord Mansfield was immediately followed by one from Lord Mulgrave, and others from the Duke of Gloucester and Sir George Beaumont. The latter gentleman may be considered the ideal of an artist's friend. Thoroughly versed in the principles, history, and practice of art, and only excluded from a high share of its honours by a want of executive facility, he not only ordered a picture with a tasteful wisdom that enlisted every true artist's gratitude, but watched its progress with an appreciative enthusiasm that awakened the best sympathies of the painter; his tact and liberality were

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equal to his intelligence and taste. His letters to Wilkie are beautiful illustrations of character, as well as evidences of artistic knowledge and zeal. His home was the favourite resort of the fraternity, and his visits and letters cheered the labours and the lives of a class of men who need more and receive less recognition than any other.

Wilkie continued to illustrate the subjects that from the first arrested his mind; usually they were tinged with his own experience, and had a distinct national association; and always the graces of execution were made to elucidate the characteristic in expression. "The Blind Fiddler," "The Letter of Introduction," "The Reading of the Will," "The Penny Wedding," "The Card Players," "The Newsmonger," "The Unexpected Visitor," "The Cut Finger," "Guess my Name," "The Parish Beadle," "Rent Day," and "The Rabbit on the Wall," are pictures, the very names of which at once suggest the genius of Wilkie, the originality of his sphere, and the causes of his popularity. Except to professional readers, the description of a picture is usually tedious and vague; the general character of those of Wilkie may be inferred from their names; while the inimitable skill and effect of their execution has been made familiar by the excellent engravings of the originals so widely distributed on both sides of the ocean. Like the poems of Burns, they speak directly to the heart and fancy, to the sense of humour and humanity;

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and, humble as is their apparent aim, few works of art breathe so universal a language; for it is derived from and addressed to our common nature, with only such local and individual modification, as give it significance and personality.

The "Reading of the Will" is said to have been suggested by Bannister the comedian; it is one of the most characteristic not only of Wilkie's pictures, but of the school to which it belongs; it is a kind of sublimated Hogarth, a genuine scene in life's drama, expressive, true, and having that fine mixture of nature, irony of observation, and skill, which forms the excellence of the domestic style of art. The business air of the attorney, the snuffling boy with his marbles, the pensive coquetry of the bouncing widow, the gallant devotion of the stalwart officer, and the flustering, indignant movement of the piqued dame, are eloquent exhibitions of character. For unity of design artists give the preference to the "Blind Fiddler;" the old man's complacent look at the sight of the children's pleasure, the boy imitating the musician with a pair of bellows, the leaping of the infant, and the mother's sympathetic delight, form a family scene under the influence of music, at once sweet, natural and harmonious.

Probably no single work exhibited at the Royal Academy ever produced the immediate effect of "The Waterloo Gazette." From the women leaning out of the windows to drink in the thrilling news, to the

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oyster suspended on the half-raised fork of the entranced listener, every figure and object indicates the effect of the tidings, and this so vividly as to absorb and infect spectators of every class.

The English school of painting is admirably illustrative of English life and character. It is essentially domestic, and often so when professedly historical. Its landscapes, family groups, rural manners, or characteristic subjects depicted with elegance, nicety, expression and truth, one would instantly infer were destined to become familiar and endeared to tasteful eyes in the privacy of home: grandeur of design and exaltation of sentiment—the pictorial generalization of the old masters, intended to adorn cathedrals and princely walls, would be singularly out of place in domestic retreats. A consciousness on the part of the artists, that they thus minister to the individual and the family, seems to chasten, refine, and genially inspire their labours. There is something almost personally attaching in some of these limners as there is in the household writers of Britain; and we feel towards Gainsborough, Leslie, and Wilkie, as we do towards Thomson, Goldsmith, and Sterne. Yet one can scarcely imagine a greater variety of style than the renowned painters of England include; few contrasts in art being more absolute than those between Moreland and Turner, West and Leslie, or Reynolds and Lawrence.

In the works and artistic opinions of Wilkie there

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is more intelligence than imagination; good sense, clear reasoning, and thoughtfulness, form the basis of his genius; and these are the very qualities which distinguish the English from the Italians and Dutch, —the former having sense as the main element of their artistic activity, the second imagination, and the latter imitation. "Art," says Wilkie, "is only art when it adds mind to form;" elsewhere he speaks of Turner's "glamour of colour;" and observes: "With a certain class of subjects it is necessary to put in much that is imaginary, or without authority, and to leave out much unadapted for painting."

Few artists uniformly had a better reason for the faith that was in them than Wilkie, and his memory and observation were equally characterised by this intelligent spirit. Jerusalem recalled to his mind the imaginations of Poussin, and seemed built for all time; while he recognized in the works of Titian, Paul Veronese, and Piombo, the closest resemblance to the Syrian race, and ascribed it to the constant intercourse between Venice and the East. From his comprehensive style, he saw that Michael Angelo's prophets and sibyls resembled the Jews of the Holy City; while Raphael and Da Vinci recalled nature. He seems justly to have understood himself, and never painted well, except when self-impelled to a subject. He declined a commission to execute a picture of the death of Sydney, from a conviction of his inaptitude for the particular style required; and all Sir Walter's counsel

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to him in behalf of certain picturesque and memorable localities in Scotland, was thrown away upon the artist, who, meanwhile was busy in his own manner, collecting pictorial data, and providing what his friends called "relays of character,"—working up his inimitable conceptions, and, at intervals, replenishing his purse by limning a portrait; in the latter department, his most elaborate works are the Queen and her Council, Wellington, O'Connell, and Scott's family at Abbotsford.

In one of his felicitous speeches, Wilkie remarked of his native country: "Bleak as are her mountains, and homely as are her people, they have yet in their habits and occupations a characteristic acuteness and feeling;" and these he seemed as much inspired to embody and preserve as Scott the historic associations, or Burns the rustic sentiment of the land; and his eminent success is chiefly attributable to the possession, in a high degree, of the traits of his nation—sagacity, perseverance, and a kind of implicit faith in the understanding as the guide to truth. His habit of interrupting conversation whenever he did not clearly understand what was said, and insisting on an explanation, his comments on art, and his patient experiments, both observant and executive, in order to arrive at the actual reflection of nature, evince a self-reliance and intelligent persistency that insured an ultimate triumph. He was usually an entire year in producing a work; it first existed vaguely in his mind

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for a long interval, and around the primitive conception were gradually clustered hints caught from experience: and when at last on the easel, repeated changes brought it slowly to perfection. It indicates unusual perspicuity in his teacher at Edinburgh that he wrote the elder Wilkie, that there was something of Correggio's manner in his son's drawing, and that "the more delicacy required in the execution the more successful would he be." He also prophesied his ability for the higher range of art, founded on this truth, and exactitude in the treatment of humble subjects. Yet when Wilkie first presented himself with the Earl of Leven's introduction to the Trustees' Academy, he was refused admission on the ground of his technical ignorance. The deficiency in imitative skill, which he had enjoyed no adequate opportunity to gain, was thus suffered to blind the professor to his originality of conception—the rarest and most valuable gift of the artist. When culture and experience had given him a control of the vocabulary of art, his genius unfolded into what has been aptly called "the skill of Hogarth, and the glow without the grossness of Teniers." There is always a moral as well as a graphic power in his works—a lesson of humanity—a glimpse of universal truth, which exalt the homeliest details, and gives significance to every casual touch.

Wilkie's artist-life was chiefly diversified by social recreation and travel. On his journeys to the Con-

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tinent, his constant attention was given to pictures, and his letters abound in wise, just, and independent criticism. In Germany he enjoyed the satisfaction of finding two of his best works held in great estimation —"The Reading of the Will" and "The Toilet of a Bride:" the possession of the former having been amicably disputed by the kings of England and Bavaria. He revelled in the examination of the Correggios at Parma, gazed with interest on Rembrandt's house at Antwerp, was reminded of Cuyp at Nimeguen, and studied Michael Angelo with reverence in Italy. He took the Sultan's portrait at Constantinople, and was honoured by a public dinner at Rome, at which the Duke of Hamilton presided, and all the artists of distinction in the Eternal City were present. His last pilgrimage was to the East; and the record of his impressions overflows with a keen, yet holy appreciation of its scenes and history. With his portfolio enriched by sketches of the landscape, costume, and physiognomy, in which that memorable region abounds, his views of art enlarged and his fancy teeming with new subjects, on his way home his life prematurely closed on board an oriental steamer in the harbour of Gibraltar.

His views of art were both acute and comprehensive. He recognized the spiritual aim of Correggio and the detailed fidelity of the Dutch painters, and, in his last manner, more perfectly united them than any previous limner; "take away simplicity from art," he

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writes, "and away goes all its influence;" yet elsewhere he declares that the "power of stirring deep emotion, and not of overcoming difficulties, is her peculiar glory." He considered art a language to be used wisely, and sought his own material among the pipers and deer-stalkers of Athol, in the byway hovels of Ireland, in Jew's Row, London, in projecting gables, in byway incidents, in the sagacity of mind and kindliness of heart of the aged, in the mirth of the Lowlands, in the figures at the public bath on the Danube, in the old scribe at the mosque door, and in the incidental groups, brilliant harmony of colour, and effective light and shade which nature and life afforded. He appealed to the immediate; selected themes of national interest, and made noble pictures out of familiar materials; hence, the ardent recognition and unbounded popularity he enjoyed. "From Giotto to Michael Angelo," he remarks, "expression and sentiment seem the first things thought of, while those who followed seemed to have allowed technicalities to get the better of them." In Wilkie's happiest efforts the desirable proportion between these two elements of art is completely realized.

An ingenious work has been published to show the effect of different mechanic trades upon the animal economy; a curious branch of the inquiry might include the influence of special kinds of mental action upon the brain and nerves. We have seen that Wilkie's superiority consisted in the minutiæ of

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expression attained by intense study; after thus executing several renowned works, he seems to have felt great cerebral disturbance; the power of sustained attention was invaded; when his mind became fixed upon a sketch or a conception, suddenly a mist would rise before his eyes, his ideas would grow bewildered, and only after an interval of repose or recreation, could he again command his faculties. The discriminating reader of his own account of the process by which he worked out his artistic ideas, cannot fail to recognize in the assiduous concentration of thought upon the details of expression, if not the proximate cause, at least as aggravating this tendency to cerebral disease. A succession of domestic bereavements and pecuniary difficulties consequent upon the failure of his bankers, increased these symptoms in Wilkie, induced his Eastern tour, and doubtless occasioned his apparently sudden demise.

Perhaps, too, the mental necessity of a change of at first to modify his style, and seek in habit led him his last pictures more general effects. From whatever cause, he certainly astonished even his admirers by the graceful ease with which he, all at once, rose to the dignity of historical subjects and a more exalted dramatic expression. Hints of this phase of his genius he had, indeed, given at an early date, in the beautiful sentiment of the scene from the Gentle Shepherd—one of his first works, and subsequently in the picture of "Alfred the Great in the Neatherd's

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Cottage ;" but the feeling and power displayed in the "Chelsea Pensioners," the "Maid of Saragossa" and "Knox Preaching the Reformation," proved that Wilkie could soar, at will, into the higher spheres of art, and carry his principles of execution into the noblest class of subjects. These and other pictures of the kind, besides possessing his usual merit of being eminently characteristic, were not less remarkable for their comprehensive spirit. The "Peep o' Day," tells in two figures the whole story of Ireland's wrongs ; the "Chelsea Pensioners" is the most pathetic tribute to patriotic valour ever put upon canvas ; sailors and soldiers, with their wives and children, wept over it at the exhibition.

The "Spanish Posada" is an epitome of modern Spain—grouping, as it does, with such truth to fact and nature, a Guerilla council of war, a Dominican, a monk of the Escurial, a Jesuit, a patriot in the costume of Valencia, the landlady serving her guests with chocolate, a mendicant student of Salamanca, with his lexicon and cigar, whispering soft things in her ear, a contrabandist on a mule, an armed Castilian, a dwarf with a guitar, a goatherd, the muzzled house-dog, the pet lamb, and the Guadarma Mountains in the background. Wilkie's picture and Byron's verses have made the Maid of Saragossa familiar to the civilized world ; but perhaps no single work combines the excellences of Wilkie in a more impressive manner than "Knox." The still-life is as

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exact as if painted by a Flemish master, and as suggestive as if designed by Hogarth; all the faces are authentic portraits;—the expression of the stern and eloquent reformer, and the effect of what he says upon the different persons assembled, is absolutely and relatively characteristic. The whole scene is, as it were, thus redeemed in vital significance from the past. Wilkie explored the palace at Holyrood, the portraits of the leaders of that day, and attended the preaching of Chalmers and Irving, to obtain the materials of this inimitable work—in which the highest graces of the Flemish and Italian schools seem united. Calm, observant, persevering and acute, Wilkie thus won successive victories in art, and proved his faith in its conservative worth by embodying memorable national events, until he fairly earned the praise of being the "most original, vigorous and varied, of the British painters." He continued, as he advanced, to bear his honours meekly —from the freedom of his native town to the order of knighthood, the *éclat* of an exhibition of his collected works, the friendship of the noble, the gifted and the powerful, and the annual enthusiasm excited by his contributions to the academy. His birth was registered in an obscure Scotch parish, and his death in the log-book of a Mediterranean steamer; yet, within the fifty-two years thus included—how richly did he contribute to art, win fame, and vindicate genius!

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THE REVIEWER:

LORD JEFFREY.

One cool morning, during our last war with England, a group of Knickerbocker *savans* might have been seen on the Battery, eagerly watching the approach of a vessel. On her deck, at the same moment, the inspection of a passenger's baggage was going on, under the eye of a vigilant officer of the customs—whose herculean proportions and deliberate air were in amusing contrast with the brisk movements and diminutive figure of the indignant owner of the trunks and boxes thus overhauled and scrutinized. At last, swelling with indignation, the little man turned to his burly tormentor, with the question—à la Cæsar—"Sir! do you know who I am?"

"Yes," replied the officer, "you are the editor of a Scotch magazine;" and immediately continued his examination, as if determined to prove the querist a smuggler.

Quite different were the manners of the expectant

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group at the pier, when the irritated gentleman stepped upon shore. Their deferential greeting and urgent hospitality soon put him in better humour, without, however, diminishing the self-complacency of his bearing. The scene perfectly illustrated a singular characteristic of the times—the ascendency gained over public opinion by the press, and the newly-established power of criticism.

The gentleman whose arrival in the United States was thus signalized, was Francis Jeffrey, who, having contracted an engagement of marriage with an American lady whom he met abroad, had come over, under the protection of a cartel specially granted for the purpose, in a government ship, to marry the lady of his choice. The practical independence and good sense of the scion of democracy who examined his baggage, rebelled at a certain vague idea he had somewhere acquired—that the wise men of his native city pinned their faith upon a foreign periodical; and sharing in the animosity then cherished against Great Britain, he was far from pleased at the demonstration of respect to the Scotch editor manifested in the vessel that brought, and the reception that awaited him; while the learned coterie who eagerly seized upon the stranger, beheld in him the incarnation of mental vigour, wit, knowledge, and pleasantry, which, under the name of the Edinburgh Review, had been their chief intellectual repast for several preceding years. There was nature and reason on both sides—a resistance to

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foreign domination, even in matters of taste and speculation, on the one hand—for the custom-house officer had published a book or two in his day—and a hearty recognition of mental obligation on the other. Looking upon the man through the expanding vista of succeeding triumphs in periodical criticism and enlarged literary culture, you can readily take that medium ground between the extremes of independence and admiration, where the truth doubtless lies.

At the period referred to, however, Jeffrey's position was a remarkable social phenomenon. The son of a Glasgow tradesman or mechanic, and educated for the bar—by means of a certain degree of taste, a winning style, polished irony, and clever argumentative ability, he vaulted to the throne of criticism, became a literary autocrat—the Napoleon of the world of letters—not without some claim to the distinction, indeed, but yet owing it chiefly to ingenuity, perseverance, and audacity. The reason of this success is obvious. He was the pioneer reviewer; the first who discovered the entire significance of the cabalistic "*we*." With an acute though not comprehensive power of reflection he united remarkable tact; and, by virtue of these two qualities, naturally succeeded in pleasing that large class of readers who are neither wholly superficial nor profound, but a little of both. He had a metaphysical turn without rising to the title of a moral philosopher; and could speculate upon abstract

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questions with an ease and agreeableness that rendered them entertaining. Accordingly he made abstruse subjects familiar, and delighted many who had never been conscious of great insight, with the idea that they could appreciate the mysteries of knowledge. There is more, however, that is plausible and attractive than original or suggestive in the metaphysical dissertations of Jeffrey. The talent of the writer, rather than the novelty or consistency of his theories, is to be admired. The article, for instance, on Alison's Taste is a charming specimen of this kind of writing; but it wants definite and satisfactory impressions. It gratifies a taste in composition rather than a passion for truth, which should guide and inspire such investigations.

Qualities attractive in themselves become obnoxious when incongruously united with others of an opposite moral nature. To an honest and loving spirit the coexistence of beauty and falsehood is too painful for contemplation; and the most fascinating manners revolt, when their hypocrisy is once discovered. Sterne prays for a reader who will surrender the reins of imagination to the author's hands: now it is a law of human nature that such a tribute is only spontaneously yielded to geniality; and the difficulty of a hearty concession, even of opinion, to Lord Jeffrey, is that he is more peremptory and acute than sympathetic and respectful. An independent and, especially, a reverent mind, naturally distrusts the

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dogmatical tone and plausible reasoning of his criticisms. He discusses a subject with charming vivacity, exhibits an ingenuity that is admirable; and displays a knowledge of outward relations and historical facts that commands respect; and, if the theme is purely objective, unassociated with sentiment of any description, and appealing to mere curiosity, there are few writers who are more delightful; but when he approaches a subject dear to affection, or consecrated by hallowed memories, we often shrink as from the touch of a coarse and mechanical operator. He then seems to speak without authority; we instinctively question his right to teach, and feel that he is a ruthless intruder into sacred places.

The truth is, that Lord Jeffrey, by nature, education, and habits of thought, was a special pleader. He used words and ideas for an immediate purpose; his object, when most in earnest, is to gain a point; his liberality and depth of feeling were in reverse proportion to his cleverness and information. His great moral defect was want of modesty. He does not appear to have known, by experience, the feeling of self-distrust, butthought himself quite competent to dictate to the world, not only on legal, but on literary and social topics. This reliance upon his own reason gives force and point to those disquisitions the scope of which came within his legitimate range, but makes him offensive, with all his agreeability of style, the moment he transcends his proper sphere. He manifests, in an

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extraordinary degree, the Scotch idiosyncrasy which refers everything exclusively to the understanding. He was essentially literal.

The interest of Lord Jeffrey centres in the fact, that its subject was the prime agent of a literary revolution. The incidents of his life are the reverse of extraordinary; his professional career has been surpassed, in many instances, by his fellow-advocates; his habits were systematic and moral; and his outward experience was the usual alternation of business, society, journeys, and rural seclusion, which constitutes the routine of a prosperous and intelligent citizen. A native of Edinburgh, where he was chiefly educated, he passed a few uncomfortable months at Oxford; returned home and finished his preparatory studies, under excellent teachers; after much hesitation, adopted the law as a pursuit; in due time was admitted to the bar, rose to the office of Lord Advocate, took an active part in politics, was twice happily married;—he visited London frequently, and there enjoyed the best intellectual society; made excursions to different parts of England, Wales, Ireland, and Scotland; engaged zealously in the debates and genial intercourse of one of the most brilliant clubs ever instituted; and died in his seventy-seventh year, deeply lamented by a large and gifted circle of Edinburgh society, as well as by a tenderly attached family and a host of noble friends. In this career, so eminently respectable and fortunate, there is obviously little to impress the

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public. No dramatic scenes, curious adventures, tragic combats with fate, or touching mysteries of inward life;—all is plain, sensible, prudent, and successful. With the exception of a rhetorical triumph, a good descriptive hint of scenery or character, and those interludes of sorrow incident to the lot of man, when the angel of death bears off the loved and honoured, a singularly even tenor marks the experience of Jeffrey, as described in his correspondence.

Neither is there discoverable any surprising endowment or fascinating gift, such as renders the very name of some men a spell to quicken fancy and to draw tears. The order of his mind is within the sphere of the familiar; only in aptness, in constant exercise and skill, was it above the average. With the utilitarian instinct and thorough rationalism of his country, Jeffrey wisely cultivated and judiciously used his powers; above all, he never distrusted them, but, with the patience and the faith of a determined will, kept them at work to the best advantage, and probably reaped as large a harvest, in proportion both to the quality of the soil and the quantity of the seed, as Scotch shrewdness and thrift ever realized. Yet, to continue the similitude, it was more by successive crops, than by grand and lasting fruits, that his labour was rewarded: some flowers of fancy and a goodly stock of palatable fodder grew in his little garden, but no stately evergreens, sacred night-bloom, or glowing passion-flowers, such as make lovely for ever the haunts of original genius. To drop

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metaphor, Lord Jeffrey owes his reputation, and is indebted for the interest of his biography, to the éclat, influence, and fame of the Edinburgh Review. The merit of taking the initiative in a more free and bold style of periodical literature, the advantages of the reform thus induced, and the intellectual pleasure derived from the open and spirited discussion, by adequate writers, of public questions, are benefits justly associated with his name and altogether honourable to his memory. These services, however, are identified in many minds, with an undue sense of his critical authority and a submission to his dicta occasioned by a graceful effrontery of tone, rather than absolute capacity.

Circumstances greatly favoured his literary success. At the epoch of the commencement of his enterprise, the liberal party stood in need of an efficient organ. The existent periodicals were comparatively tame and old-fashioned. It was one of those moments in public affairs, when a bold appeal was certain to meet with an emphatic response; and the party of friends, among whom originated the idea of a new and spirited journal, were not only fitted by the vigour of their age, the warmth of their feelings, and their respective talents, for the undertaking in view, but were urged by their position, sympathy, and hopes. The great secret of the immediate popularity of the work was undoubtedly its independence. The world instinctively rallies around self-reliance, not only in the exigencies of actual

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life, but in the domain of letters and politics. Accordingly, the freedom of discussion at once indulged, the moral courage and spirited tone of this fraternal band, won not less than it astonished. The example, so unexpectedly given, in a region distant from the centre of taste and action in the kingdom, of candid and firm assertion of the right of private judgment, the fearless attitude assumed, and the enlightened spirit displayed, carried with them a novel attraction and the highest promise.

The Edinburgh Review was the entering wedge in the old tree of conservatism which had long overshadowed the popular mind; it was like the trumpet-note of an intellectual reinforcement, the glimmering dawn of a more expansive cycle in the world of thought. The feverish speculations ushered in by the French Revolution had prepared the way for the reception of new views; the warfare of parties had settled down into a truce favourable to the rational examination of disputed questions. The wrongs of humanity were more candidly acknowledged; a new school of poetry and philosophy had commenced; and in Scotland, where Jeffrey declares there was a remarkable "intellectual activity and conceit of individual wisdom," a medium of opinion and criticism such as this was seasonable and welcome. Yet it is characteristic of his cool, uninspired mind, that he entered upon the experiment with little enthusiasm. He says, in his correspondence, that his "standard of human

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felicity is set at a very moderate pitch," and that he has persuaded himself that "men are considerably lower than angels;" his expectations were confessedly the reverse of sanguine; and he eagerly sought to establish his professional resources and make literature subsidiary. His allies were finely endowed. The wit of Sydney Smith alone was a new feature in journalism; and the remarkable coterie of writers, of which the Review soon became the nucleus, gave it the prestige of more versatile talent than any similar work has ever boasted; so that the editor justly says: "I am a feudal monarch at best, and my throne is overshadowed by the presumptuous crests of my nobles."

A novelty in Lord Jeffrey's position was the social and even civic importance this species of literature acquired. The idea of a man of letters had been associated with refinement, meditation, and a life abstracted, in a great degree, from the active concerns of the world. There was, however, something quite adventurous, exciting, and eventful in a vocation that so constantly provoked resentment and elicited admiration. Challenged by Moore, carrying Boswell drunk to bed in his boyhood, in correspondence with Byron, dining with Scott, living within constant range of Sydney Smith's artillery of *bon-mots*, the companion of Brougham, Mackenzie, Playfair, Erskine, Campbell, Hamilton, and other celebrated men of the day, his natural fluency derived point and emphasis from colloquial privileges; and

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doubtless somewhat of the antagonistic character of his writings was derived from the lively debates of the club, and excited by the attrition of such vigorous and individual minds. We are told of his "speculative playfulness," "graceful frankness," and "gay sincerity;" these, and epithets of a similar kind, sufficiently indicate the causes of his success. It was through the very qualities that constitute agreeability in society that he pleased as a critic. More serious and intense writing would have repelled the majority. Lord Jeffrey made no grave demands on the thinking faculty; he did not appeal to high imagination, but confined himself to the level of a glib, polished, clever, and often very pleasant style. It was a species of man-of-the-world treatment of books, and therefore very congenial to mediocre philosophers and complacent men of taste.

But to recognize in such a critic the æsthetic principles which should illustrate works of genius, is to wantonly neglect those more earnest thinkers and reverent lovers of the noblest developments of humanity who have, through a kindred spirit, interpreted the mysteries of creative minds. There are passages in Coleridge, Ulrici, Schlegel, Mackintosh, Hazlitt, Wilson, Carlyle, Lamb, and Hunt, which seize upon the vital principle, give the magnetic clew, prolong the key-note of the authors they have known and loved, compared to which Jeffrey's most brilliant comments are as a pyrotechnic glare to the beams

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of the sun. The list of two hundred articles contributed by him to the Edinburgh displays such a variety of subjects as it is quite impossible for any one mind either thoroughly to master or sincerely relish. The part which he most ably performs, as a general rule, is what may be called the digest of the book; he gives a *catalogue raisonnée*, in the broadest sense of the term—and this is excellent service. Biographies, travels, works of science, and history are thus introduced to the world under a signal advantage, when there is no motive to carp or exaggerate in the statements. Next to this class of writings, he deals skilfully with what, for the sake of distinction, may be called the rhetorical poets—those who give clear and bold expression to natural sentiment, without a predominance of the psychological and imaginative. The school of Pope, which appeals to the understanding, the fancy, and to universal feeling, he understands. Hayley, Crabbe, Campbell, Scott, and portions of Byron, he analyses well, and often praises and blames with reason; to Miss Edgeworth, Irving, and Stewart, he is just. But the sentiment of Barry Cornwall, the suggestive imagery of Coleridge, the high philosophy of Wordsworth, and the luxuriant beauty of Keats, often elude the grasp of his prying intellect.

The lack of spiritual insight was another disqualification of Lord Jeffrey as a critic of the highest poetry. Trained to logical skill, and apt in rhetoric,

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he never seems to have felt a misgiving in regard to their sufficiency as means of interpretation of every species of mental product. The intuitive creations of genius, born of the soul and not ingenuously elaborated by study, the "imagination all compact" of the genuine bard, were approached by his vivacious mind with an irreverent alacrity. To place himself in sympathetic relation with an individual mind, the only method of reliable criticism, was a procedure he ignored; the play of his own fancy and knowledge, and the oracular announcement of his judgment, were the primary objects; the real significance of the author quite secondary. He reviewed objectively, and arraigned books at his tribunal without that jury of peers which true genius claims by virtue of essential right. A merely agreeable or indifferent subject thus treated may afford entertainment, exactly as a lively chat on the passing topics of the day amuses a vacant hour; but when the offspring of an earnest mind, and the overflowing of a nature touched to fine issues, are sportively discussed and despatched with gay authority, the impatience of more reverent minds is naturally excited.

There was a philosophical elevation in Burke that tempered his severest comments; a noble candour in Montaigne that often reconciles us to his worldliness. Carlyle betrays so deep a sympathy that it robs his sarcasm of bitterness, and Macaulay is so picturesque and glowing that the reader cheerfully allows an occa-

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sional want of discrimination to unity of effect. But to that mental superiority which consists in sprightliness of tone and ingenuity of thought we are less charitable; pertness of manner is not conciliating; and off-hand, nonchalant, and superficial decisions, in the case of authors who have excited real enthusiasm and spoken to our inmost consciousness, are not received without serious protest. It is for these reasons that Lord Jeffrey occupies but a temporary place; he did not seize upon those broad and eternal principles which render literary obligations permanent; he was an excellent pioneer, and cleared the way for more complete writers to follow; his independence was conducive to progress in criticism, and his agreeable style made it attractive; but a more profound and earnest feeling is now absolutely required in dealing with the emanations of genius. Too much of the merely clever and amusing manner of Horace Walpole, and too little enthusiasm for truth, characterise his remarks on the really gifted; in the discussion of current literature, the claims of which are those of information and style only, no reviewer can give a better compend, or sum up merits and defects with more brilliancy and tact.

It is natural to expect, in the posthumous biography of influential men, a key to the riddle of their success, a solution of the problem of character, and such a revelation of personal facts as will throw light

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upon what is anomalous in their career, or explain, in a measure, the process of their development. The lives of Dr. Johnson, of Sir Walter Scott, of Schiller, and, among recent instances, of Keats, Lamb, and Sterling, by the new information they convey in regard to the domestic situation, the original temperament, and the private circumstances of each, have greatly modified previous estimates, and awakened fresh sympathy and more liberal judgments. The life of Lord Jeffrey leaves upon the mind a better impression of the man, than obtains among those who knew him only through the pages of the Edinburgh Review, while it confirms the idea which those writings suggest of the author. On the one hand, is found a love of nature and a life of the affections which could not have been inferred, at least to their real extent, from the articles on which his literary fame rests; and on the other, we perceive exactly the original habits of mind, course of study, and tendencies of opinion to be anticipated from his intellectual career. Accordingly, the integrity, steady friendships, conjugal and parental devotion, and enjoyment of the picturesque, which are so conspicuous in the man and so worthy of respect and sympathy, should not be allowed to interfere with our consideration of his merits as a writer and critic.

Jeffrey belongs essentially to the class of writers who are best designated as rhetoricians; that is, if

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closely analyzed, it will be seen that his force lies entirely in sagacity and language. Fluency, vitalized by a certain animation of mind, is his principal means of effect; words he knows well how to marshal in brilliant array; he points a sentence, rounds a paragraph, gives emphasis to an expression, with both grace and spirit. But the value of these elements of style is to be estimated, like the crayons and pigments of the artist, by the qualities they are made to unfold, the ideas they embody, the uses to which they are devoted. Jeffrey possessed them by virtue of an original quickness of intellect and patient industry.

The most striking fact of his early culture is the perseverance with which he practised the art of composition, not as an academic exercise, but as a means of personal improvement; he wrote elaborate papers on various subjects; and at the end recorded his opinion of them, usually the reverse of complacent; and this course he pursued for years, as is proved by the quantity and the dates of the manuscripts he left. No stronger evidence is required of the predominance of the technical over the inspired in his authorship, than this deliberate toil to master the art of expression, as a means of success and a professional acquisition. It now appears that he carried the experiment into verse, and imitated the manner of all the English poets, evidently hoping to obtain the same facility in poetry as in prose. His good sense, however, soon

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induced him to abandon the former attempt; but the knowledge of versification and the machinery of this highest department of letters, thus acquired, was the basis of his subsequent criticisms, and accounts for his familiarity with the letter, and ignorance of the inward spirit, of the Muse. It is, indeed, a perfectly Scotch process, to set about a course of study and practice in order to think correctly even on subjects so identified with natural sentiment as to repudiate analysis. The romance of literature, or rather its highest function,—that of appealing to human consciousness and unfolding the mysteries of the passions and the sense of awakened beauty,—is effectually destroyed by so cool and premeditated an application of causality to emotion. There is in it a literal mode of thought utterly destructive of illusion: the vague and inexplicable, the "terror and pity" which lift our nature above itself, and ally it with the infinite, are quite unrecognized; the oracles of humanity are rudely disrobed, the sanctities of art violated for the sake of conventional propriety; and what should be instinctively regarded as holy, precious, and apart from the familiar, is made to wear a commonplace aspect.

Jeffrey seems to have mistaken a zest for external charms for a sympathy with poetical experience. Even his essay on Beauty, in the Encyclopædia Britannica, is commended by his biographer for its

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graceful ingenuity, and not for sympathetic insight or profound analysis. His flippancy, however pleasant when expended on casual topics, is often intolerable as applied to men of genius. He sees that Joanna Baillie is a "nice old woman," but faintly realizes the positive grandeur of feeling which, like a solemn atmosphere, exhales from Basil and De Montford; he designates faults in Southey's poems, and recognizes the looming of his gorgeous fancy, as one might point out an agreeable pattern of chintz; he is very charitably disposed towards "Tommy Campbell," wonders at the "rapidity and facility" of Burns, and thinks, with his own "present fortune and influence," he could have preserved him a long time; he is of opinion that Wordsworth, upon acquaintance, is "not the least lakish, or even in a degree poetical, but rather a hard and sensible worldly sort of a man"; and that Crabbe, "the wretch, has outrageous faults;" he writes dunning letters to Horner, urging him to "do" Malthus or Sismondi, very much as a sea-captain might write to his mate to scrape a deck, or a farmer order his man to hoe a field of potatoes; he praises Dickens's "Notes" on this country, as shallow a book of travels as ever appeared, but does not relish the character of Micawber, one of the best creations of the author; and he indulges in reminiscences of the New York Park and Bloomingdale, without having taken the trouble, dur-

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ing some months' residence in that city, to go up the Hudson.

The most creditable of his literary tastes were his admiration of Sir James Mackintosh, and his sensibility to the pathos of such characters as Little Nell and Tom Pinch. Indeed, the "gentle sobs" he confesses, and the hearty appreciation he felt towards the humane novelist, seem to indicate that, with advancing life, his nature mellowed and his sensibilities deepened. A kindness for men of genius, which led him frequently to offer them judicious advice and pecuniary aid, is one of Jeffrey's most excellent traits; and a social enterprise which made his house the centre of intellectual companionship in Edinburgh, and induced habits of genial intercourse among his contemporaries, men of state, letters, and science, is also to be regarded as a public benefit. Nor less frankly should be acknowledged his unsullied honour, refined hospitality, habits of patient industry, and free and often brilliant conversation. But these benign and useful qualities, while they challenge respect and gratitude, and endear the memory of Jeffrey, do not give authority to his principles of literary judgment, or sanction his claim to be the expositor of the highest literature and the deepest truth.

It is difficult to realize that the amiable character depicted in these volumes is the same individual whose critical severity once caused such a flutter in

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the dovecote of authors; whose opinion was expected with almost the trepidation of a judicial sentence, and whose praise and rebuke were deemed, by so large and respectable an audience, as final tests of literary rank. Lord Cockburn assumes, what, indeed, facts seem greatly to confirm, that his award was usually conscientious, and that he had warmly at heart the best interests of literature as he understood them. Of malice or selfish views there is scarcely any evidence; and his personal feelings towards the very writers he most stringently condemned appear to have been kind. There is a striking contrast between the amenities of taste, good fellowship, domesticity, and rural enjoyment, amid which he lived, and the idea of a ferocious critic so generally identified with his name. It is another and a memorable instance of the want of correspondence, in essential traits, between authorship and character. To have inspired confidence, respect, and affection to the extent visible in his memoirs, among the most gifted and the best men of his day, is ample proof of the merit claimed in his behalf by the friend who describes his career. Yet even admitting the conclusion drawn from these premises,—that "he was the founder of a new system of criticism, and this a higher one than had ever existed," and that "as an editor and a writer he did as much to improve his country and the world as can almost ever be done by discussion, by a single man,"—there is a progressive as well as a

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retrospective standard, an essential as well as a comparative test, and a degree not less than an extent of insight to which such a writer is amenable, and by which alone he can be philosophically estimated. It is doubtless a most useful and desirable object of criticism to elucidate the art and discover the moral influence of literature; the censor in both these spheres is a requisite minister to social welfare; but they do not cover the whole ground. Genius may transgress an acknowledged law of taste in obedience to a higher law of truth; and the so-called moral of a work may be, and often is, misinterpreted by conventional rules. Comprehensive sympathies, as well as quick perception, recognition of the original, as well as knowledge of the prescriptive, are needful qualities in the critic. Loyalty to intuitive sentiment, as well as to external standards, is demanded; and a catholic temper, which embraces with cordiality the idiosyncrasies that invariably distinguish original minds, is indispensable to their appreciation.

It is not what Lord Jeffrey "rather likes," or what "will never do" in his opinion, that disposes of those appeals to the human soul which the truly gifted utter, and to which mankind respond; and the courteous dogmatism and the jaunty grace with which this famous reviewer sometimes pronounces upon the calibre and the mission of the priests of nature, are, therefore, not only inadmissible, but frequently impertinent. One is occasionally reminded of Charles

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Lamb's impatience at the literal character of the Scotch mind, and his quaint anecdotes to illustrate it, in Jeffrey's positive rule-and-compass style when discussing the productions of genuine poets. How to enjoy these benefactions is as important a lesson as how to judge them; and it is no less an evidence of discrimination deeply to feel beauties than readily to pick flaws.

The art of philosophizing attractively upon literary and political questions of immediate interest, was indeed, excellently illustrated by Jeffrey, in those instances which did not surpass his power of insight. Where the personal feelings were not engaged, it was also an agreeable pastime to follow his destructive feats; see him annihilate a poetaster, or insinuate away the pretensions of a book-wright. This he did in so cool a manner, and with such a gentlemanly sneer and refinement of badinage, that it was like watching an elegant fencing-match, or capital shots in a pistol-gallery. The process and the principle, however, of this kind of reviewing were based upon that French philosophy which delights in ridicule and ignores reverence. Accordingly its spirit is essentially sceptical, fault-finding, narrow, and smart, and therefore quite inapplicable to the intuitive, the latent, delicate, and more lofty emanations of literature. Its office is to deal with talent not genius, with attainments not inspiration—with the form and *rationale*, not with the minute

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principles and divine mysteries of life. Where knowledge, tact, and wit were available, Jeffrey shone. He possessed a remarkable degree of what may be called the eloquence of sense, but he lacked soul—the assimilating and revealing principle in man. His intellect needed humanizing. He looked upon an author objectively, with a scientific not a sympathetic vision, and therefore, as regards the highest, never came into a legitimate relation with them. He wanted that enthusiasm which, if it sometimes exaggerates merit and is blind to defects, yet always warms the mind into an unity of perception and an intensity of observation, which opens new vistas of truth. Jeffrey's analytical power is not denied, but one only demurs at the extent of authority as a critic which, by virtue of it, he claimed. There is a captious tone in his reviews of poets, an unimpassioned statement, a self-possessed balancing of the scales of justice, quite too mechanical to be endured with patience. He thrusts himself arrogantly into a sphere of thought or feeling sacred to thousands, and peers about with the bold curiosity of a successful attorney. He really appreciates only knowledge, reasoning power, and the external laws of taste; and whatever appealed to instincts which were deficient in him, he pronounced either false or absurd.

A man of any real modesty or respect for others, would hesitate before utterly condemning a foreign work held in universal admiration in the country of its

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origin; and would ascribe the fact of its not impressing him, to his own ignorance of the language or insensibility of the sentiment. Jeffrey, on the contrary, flippantly ridicules as puerile and meaningless, the favourite fiction of the Germans, while confessedly ignorant of their language, and obviously wanting that imagination to which it appeals. He rails against the errors of Alfieri, Swift, and Burns, with a scornful hardihood that shows how little their genius won his sympathies or their misfortunes touched his heart.

With a practical gauge, regulated by the intellectual tone of an Edinburgh clique, and having for its highest standard only intelligence and the laws of outward morality, he discusses the lives of such men without a capacity to enter into their motives, to appreciate the circumstances in which they were placed, or to estimate the trials and triumphs of their natures. He ascribes Franklin's self-education to the antagonism of an unfavourable situation rather than to his own perseverance and love of knowledge; and is chiefly struck in Cowper's poetry with the ballad on the loss of the Royal George. A novel of Miss Edgeworth, in which prudence and common sense are the ideal of human character, he can heartily praise; a well-written, authentic narrative, like Irving's Life of Columbus, or a faithful and graphic biography like the Memoirs of Colonel Hutchinson, he gives a very intelligent account of; but, not content with such useful labours, he has the temerity to wander out of his course, and tell the

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world that the Excursion "will never do," and that the author of Genevieve and the Ancient Mariner is a foolish mystic. His want of enthusiasm, however, in certain instances, is advantageous to a fair judgment, where works of pure imagination or sentiment are not in question. Thus, having cherished no unreasonable anticipations in regard to Fox's Life of James I., he was not disappointed on its appearance, like the rest of the world, but did the author and his book critical justice; and he exhibited with great candour the brilliant ideas of Madame de Staël, while he repudiated her perfectionist theories. Indeed, one of the greatest merits of Jeffrey, is his able synopsis of works of fact and reasoning. He sums up a book as he would a case, and makes a statement to the literary world with the ingenious brevity and emphasis that he would use to a jury. One great reason of the popularity of the Edinburgh Review was that he made it an intelligent and readable epitome of current literature.

Jeffrey claims a high and consistent morality for his long series of articles. It is true he always speaks disapprovingly of the errors of genius; but we fail to perceive in them that enlarged and tender spirit of humanity which softens judgment and throws the mantle of charity over the shivering form exposed to the pitiless world. He failed in parliament notwithstanding the shrill melody of his voice; it was too piercing to fascinate; and so we imagine his mind was too acute to embrace cordially the interests and

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mysteries of his race. Upon the former his attention was too exclusively fixed; for the latter he had not that sentiment of awe which gives a solemn meaning and a sublime pity to the contemplation of genius. Copious in information, vivacious in expression, dogmatical in tone, Jeffrey's talk, like his writing, was animated, witty, and fluent; he was often abstracted in manner, his conversation was interlarded with French epithets, and, in seclusion, he was often depressed. There was more tact and less seriousness of purpose and feeling about him than any of his brilliant contemporaries; and, therefore, his writings have not the same standard value. He sacrificed to the immediate and was a representative of the times.

There was, with all his apparent readiness and candour, no little prudence in his character. He was a kind of sublimated Yankee, and the idea of a clever literary Scotchman. The poets he really did appreciate are Campbell and Crabbe— the one by his direct rhetoric and high finish, and the other by his detail and Flemish tone, rendered themselves intelligible to Jeffrey; this was partially the case also with Byron, Moore, and Keats; but where they trench upon the highly imaginative or earnestly sentimental, he is obviously nonplussed. It is on account of the want of completeness in Jeffrey's views and sympathies that one is disposed to regard him as an able reviewer instead of a great

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critic. The evidence of this may be found in the very small quantity of his voluminous writings that now possesses any vital interest and permanent beauty; so many of his speculations want originality and a solid basis, and so many of his judgments have been superseded, that only here and there, the lightsome aptness of a remark, the grace of a description, or the analytical justice of a comment, detain us; while the sensible and pleasing tone of the style vividly realizes the cause of the sway once enjoyed by this autocrat of literature.

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THE CIVILIAN:

GOVERNEUR MORRIS.

THERE is an efficiency of character which, like the latent forces of nature, is made visible only by its results. It collects with the quietude of the electric fluid, and is silently diffused again or rapidly discharged, with no lingering traces of its energies but such as thoughtful observation reveals. Unlike the author or the artist, men thus endowed build up no permanent memorial of their renown, no distinctive and characteristic result of their lives, like a statue or a poem; neither are their names always associated with a great event or sacred occasion, like those which embalm the warrior's fame. Having more self-respect than desire of glory, their great object is immediate utility; their thought and action blend with and often direct the current of events, but with an unostentatious power that conceals their agency. As the dew condenses and the snow-flakes are woven, as the frost colours and the night-breeze strips the

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forest—they accomplish great changes in human affairs, and exert a wide and potent sway, without any parade of means and by a process that challenges no recognition. It is only when we attentively mark the effect and consider the method, that we realize, in such instances, what may be called the genius of character.

The essential difference between this species of greatness, and that which is tangibly embodied, is to be traced to the fact that, in the former, direct utility, and in the latter, abstract taste is consulted; a sense of truth, of right, of efficiency is the inspiration of the one, and a sense of beauty of the other. The superiority that is wholly intellectual or moral, when developed in action, and to meet the exigencies of society, incarnates itself too widely, sends forth too liberal ideas and is too variously active, to provide for its own glory. There is an essential disinterestedness in the position and spirit of such greatness; unconscious of self, absorbed in broad views, and as zealous in public spirit as ordinary men are in private interest, this rare and noble class of beings exercise a genial supervision and providential wisdom, with a dignity, confidence, and good faith that as clearly designates them to be legitimate counsellors in national affairs, as the appearance of a great epic shows the advent of a poet, or the spontaneous apotheosis of a hero indicates the ordained leader. The American revolution elicited a wonderful degree of this species

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of character. To its prevalence at that epoch has been justly ascribed the ultimate success of the experiment; for all the valour displayed in the camp would have been inadequate had it not been sustained by equal wisdom and firmness in the council. The mind of the country was enlisted in the struggle not less than its bone and muscle; and moral kept alive physical courage. The undismayed spirit of the people was, in a great measure, owing to a sublime trust in the integrity and intelligence of their leaders; and these qualities were sometimes embodied in an unambitious, devoted activity, more versatile, responsible and unpromising than ever before engaged the gifted spirits of a nation. The services thus rendered, were often utterly devoid of any scope for distinction: they seldom gave any vantage ground to the desire for brilliant results, and were often barren even of the excitement of adventure; they were grave, matter-of-fact, and discouraging toils—involving more personal discomfort than peril, demanding more prudence than zeal, and more patience than ingenuity: and yet essential to the great end in view, the prospect and hope of which was their exclusive motive. To this kind of fidelity the triumph of American principles is to be ascribed; and instead of seeking their origin in men of extraordinary genius we must look for them to the philosophy of character.

Few American civilians offer so noble an example as Governeur Morris. One of his ancestors is said to

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have been distinguished as a leader in Cromwell's army; weary of military life, he embarked for the West Indies, and thence came to New York, where he purchased three thousand acres of land with manorial privileges in the vicinity of Haerlem, an estate still known as Morrissiana. The descendants of this colonist took an active part in public affairs; a vein of eccentricity, often the accompaniment of originality of mind and independence of spirit seems to have always marked the family.

Governeur Morris was born on the paternal domain, January 31, 1752. His boyhood was devoted to rambling over his father's extensive farm, and he then indulged a taste for rural freedom and enjoyment, to which he returned in later years with undiminished zest and entire contentment. He was placed, when quite young, with a French teacher at New Rochelle, and thus acquired the facility in that language which proved so useful to him during his long residence in France. His college life was unusually brilliant, chiefly on account of the rhetorical ability to which it gave scope and impulse; and he was eminent for his attainments in Latin and mathematics; graduating with honour at a very early age, he entered with zeal upon the study of law, and was just rising to professional distinction when the difficulties between Great Britain and her American colonies broke out. He was soon deeply involved in the responsible toils of the Revolution; subsequently re-

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moved to Philadelphia and successfully practised at the bar; went abroad and was appointed minister to France, travelled extensively after being freed from official duties, and returned home to close his honourable and useful career in the home of his childhood. Such is an external outline of the life of Governeur Morris; but the filling up abounds with details seldom equalled in interest and value, in the merely civic life of a republican. As a legislator, financier, political essayist, ambassador, orator, and private gentleman, Governeur Morris co-operated with the leading spirits of a revolutionary age rich in eminent characters; greatly influenced the councils which ruled the destinies of an infant nation; grappled, with bold intelligence, the chaotic but pregnant elements of society and government; set a noble example of integrity and candour as an ally and a patriot; and infused a philosophic spirit and an efficient wisdom into every interest and sphere with which he came in contact.

His life was a scene of versatile activity. He carried on his law practice, Congressional duties, secret embassies, and extensive correspondence, with assiduity during the whole American war; while abroad, he engaged in large mercantile speculations, prosecuted private claims, was an *habitué* of the best society, and faithfully discharged absorbing diplomatic obligations with industry.

His diary in France, a collection of hasty data,

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evinces an uninterrupted and efficient activity—calling for the constant exercise of sagacity, wisdom and reflection, while he used to declare that the multiplicity of his duties at home, during the seven years succeeding the Declaration of Independence, notwithstanding habits of method and application, prevented his keeping any notes of his own remarkable experience.

The American traveller in Europe is struck with the frequency of inscriptions on public works announcing the prince or pontiff to whose benevolent zeal any local improvement is attributable. To perpetuate, in every manner, the memory of national benefactors, is one of the conservative features of hereditary rule. With us it is quite otherwise. The process of national growth seems to go on, in republics, like the development of nature—a constant alternation of forces, each destined to be absorbed in the other—the deeds of one generation to fertilize the arena of the next—and the future to be so exclusively contemplated, as to shut out of view the past. It is on this account that literature should attest departed worth, with authentic and careful emphasis, in a republic; and especially strive to do justice to those unpretending yet essential merits which result from character rather than genius, and like the strains of great vocalists, leave no record but that which lingers in the souls they have warmed and exalted. A brief synopsis of the public life of Governeur Morris will give but an inadequate idea

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of its utility; but it may serve to illustrate its scope and aim. At the age of eighteen he began to enlighten the minds of his countrymen on a subject of vital moment to their interests: but in regard to which their provincial experience had afforded them little insight. Political economy was then a science in embryo, and finance a branch very imperfectly understood; questions relating to the principles of trade, debt and credit, exchange and a circulating medium were rife in the different states, when the adventurous stripling astonished his elders by the original views, the acute reasoning, and the thorough knowledge with which he discussed them in the journals of the day. These and subsequent financial essays both instructed and influenced public sentiment, and prepared the way for whatever liberal and enlightened policy on this and kindred subjects was adopted.

The reputation of Governeur Morris, by these precocious writings, and several eloquent pleas to juries, was thus very early established in the colony. He was accordingly chosen a member of the first Provincial Congress; and regularly afterwards took his seat in the various assemblies there originated, under the names of Convention, Committee of Safety, and Congress, until he was duly elected to the Continental Congress. In these bodies his abilities were continually tasked, as a parliamentary orator, a private counsellor, and an efficient agent. He passed the hours between eleven and three in the

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House, dispatched, at intervals, his professional affairs, and transacted the business of three committees of which he was chairman—those on the commissary, quarter-master's, and medical departments of the army, which was in a condition that rendered these duties of the most onerous description.

When the committees of correspondence were formed, he was appointed to Westchester county, and the gallant Montgomery to Duchess. He devised a feasible and judicious plan to defray the expenses of the war, when the plan that he proposed for a reconciliation with England proved abortive. When the commander-in-chief approached on his way to join the army at the north, Governeur Morris was one of those appointed to meet him at Newark, and there commenced the mutual esteem and entire confidence between them that never diminished. His speech in favour of Independence, in the first Congress, was as remarkable for logical force as that of Patrick Henry for rhetorical fire; he was soon after sent on a mission to the Congress assembled at Philadelphia, appointed a commissioner to organize the new government, and sent to confer with General Schuyler, at Fort Edward, "on the means to be used by the state in aid of his plans of defence or resistance."

We next find him a delegate to Massachusetts in a convention to arrange "currency and prices"—a mission which was precluded by a more peremptory

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call to Washington's head-quarters. He was one of the five delegates elected on the dissolution of the New York convention that formed the constitution of the state, to represent her in the meantime. In that terrible crisis when the army were encamped at Valley Forge, and all was confusion, foreboding and privation, Governeur Morris was chosen as the bearer of encouragement and counsel to the army, and proved a most judicious and acceptable coadjutor with his beloved chief, in reducing it to something like order and comfort. His pen was then employed to draw up instructions to General Gates, and an account of the existent state of public affairs for the use of Congress.

His views on the appointment of foreigners to military office, on providing for the army, and other exigencies of the times, are impressively unfolded in his correspondence with Washington. He drafted an able and timely address to the American people on the prosperous crisis attending the French alliance; and wrote for Dr. Franklin to lay before the French ministry, "Observations on the Finances of America." In February, 1779, we find him chairman of the committee "to consider the dispatches from the American Commissioners abroad, and communications from the French minister in the United States"—"in its character and consequences"—it has been said "perhaps the most important during the war." In

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1780, during the great fiscal depression, he published in a Philadelphia journal, a series of methodical condensed and intelligent papers on the subject of continental currency and finance, and was soon after appointed assistant-financier to Robert Morris. With General Knox, he was delegated by Washington to consult with the agents of Sir Henry Clinton on an exchange of prisoners. He corresponded with the French minister on the trade with the West Indies, and induced desirable modifications of our commercial treaties.

While residing at the French capital, and mingling with more curiosity than sympathy in its social circles, he was appointed by Washington a Commissioner to England. Although his ill-success in effecting any immediate arrangement of the pending difficulties, has been ascribed to the abrupt manner which characterized his interviews with Pitt and the Duke of Leeds, and also to a breach of diplomatic courtesy, to which a high sense of honour impelled him, in communicating to the French minister then resident in London, the terms of the proposed treaty; it seems, on the other hand, to be generally conceded that the policy of the English government, at this epoch, was delay, in order to await the issue of the continental troubles before making definite terms with the United States. On his return to Paris, Governeur Morris received intelligence of his appointment as minister to France. He held the office at a terrible political crisis, discharged

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its varied duties with eminent fidelity, and although restrained by the delicacy of his position from taking an active part in the affairs of the kingdom, he exercised a brave humanity in sheltering refugees, preserving the funds of the royal family, and transmitting them to the exiles, using every available means to obtain the liberation of Lafayette, securing the lives and property of his own countrymen, and maintaining the dignity of the nation he represented.

The interval between his retirement from this office and his return home, was passed in visiting Switzerland, Germany, and other parts of Europe. During this tour his observant mind was constantly engaged—not, however, upon the objects that usually attract cultivated travellers from America; for art and antiquity his taste was not so evident as for those aspects and interests of national life which he esteemed of more practical importance. He collected information on political and commercial topics, and in regard to manufactures and agriculture. Society, however, was his chosen field, and conversation his favourite resource—"the dumb circle round a card-table" being his aversion. In Vienna, Berlin, and other capitals he seems to have been regarded from two entirely opposite points of view—the boldness and originality of his thoughts, and the manner of expressing them, giving offence to some and delight to others. His return home, after a wearisome voyage, was cordially welcomed; he immediately rebuilt the old homestead

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and adorned his ancestral domain; was elected to Congress, where his speeches on the Louisiana question, and other topics of the day, several orations delivered in New York, and his successful advocacy of the Erie Canal, attest the continuance of his public spirit. Occasional journeys, an extensive correspondence, the care of his estate, and a liberal hospitality, agreeably diversified the remainder of his life.

The foresight which seems so natural to enlarged views, was a prominent trait in Governeur Morris. His opinions were not the sudden conjectures of a heated fancy, nor the daring speculations of an undisciplined intellect. He looked calmly on a question, espoused a cause with his judgment not less than with his heart, and, having done so, knew how to abide the issue with tranquil manliness. There was nothing fanatical in his sentiments; they were generous, bold, and ardent; but they were also well-considered, reliable, and modified by reason and experience. Accordingly he looked beyond the limits of party, and disdained the cant of faction; on broad, solid, and elevated ground he loved to stand and survey his country, and the world. To his mental vision, therefore, "coming events cast their shadows before"—for his gaze was not absorbed in the details of adjacent life, but ranged far and wide, quickened by a spirit of enlightened curiosity and genuine patriotic sympathies.

Many instances might be cited of the prescience of Governeur Morris. His consistent faith in the mea-

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sures of Washington, and the intelligent support he uniformly yielded him, under all circumstances, was the instinctive adherence of a kindred spirit. Before the Revolution broke out, he saw the natural unity of the American States, and advocated a plan for "uniting the whole continent in one grand legislature." At the very outset of the French Revolution, he anticipated the course of the people, and justly defined the true policy of the Court. His letter to Lafayette distinctly presages the result to which he was unconsciously advancing, and breathes the genuine counsel of enlightened affection. One of the first to perceive the necessity of active intercourse between the seaboard and the interior of America, he broached in conversation, the idea of the Erie Canal at a time when it was deemed chimerical, steadfastly advocated the project, and greatly contributed to its achievement. The broad avenues which now intersect the metropolis of New York, and constitute its redeeming feature, were first successfully advocated by Governeur Morris.

At a period when the municipal authorities proposed to save the expense of a marble facing to the back of the City Hall, on the ground that it would never be seen except from the suburbs, unmoved by the sneers of narrow-minded incredulity, he urged that the city should be laid out as far as Haerlem. The present American coinage is based upon his plan, although modified from its original scheme; and he originated the first bank in the country

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upon principles, the utility of which experience has amply proved. Instead of dating American liberty from the Stamp Act, he traced it to the prosecution of Peter Zenger, a printer in the colony of New York — for an alleged libel — because that event revealed the philosophy of freedom, both of thought and speech, as an inborn human right, so nobly set forth in Milton's treatise on "Unlicensed Printing." It was this habitual reversion to first principles, this testing of every question by the dictates of his own understanding rather than by the watchwords of prejudice, that marked Governeur Morris as a superior man even in an age of great and active intelligence. He was a philosopher rather than a politician.

Averse to the separation of the colonies, except on the principle of self-preservation, he was among the most able champions of conciliatory measures; but, when they proved ineffectual, he engaged with all his mind and will, in the struggle for independence —at an almost entire sacrifice of private interest and feeling, being unsustained by his family and some of his earliest friends. Yet he was no indiscriminating republican. In the habits, character, and prospects of his own countrymen, he recognized a natural aptitude for the form of government under which they have so greatly advanced and prospered; but in France the case presented itself to his mind in quite a different light; there he told Lafayette, with prophetic wisdom, that he was "opposed to democracy from regard to

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liberty." Upon the same conviction that the welfare of France was most secure under legitimate monarchical rule, were founded the sentiments of his oration on the return of the Bourbons, yet memorable in New York for the offence it gave to many of his fellow-citizens, and the bold eloquence it developed in the orator. He was equally misjudged for maintaining the expediency of consolidating the public debts after the war —a measure regarded with a jealous eye by the ardent upholders of state rights, but one espoused by Governeur Morris, for the sake of the more liberal and wise policy of combining their interests and fostering the new-born and unconfirmed national sentiment. Thus, in all contingencies, he anticipated the future greatness of the country to whose welfare the flower of his youth was devoted; he saw the majestic tree in the swelling germ.

It was the habit of his mind to elicit the universal from the special, and to seize on the central idea and essential principles, instead of occupying himself with the incidental and temporary. Thus when the charges against Silas Deane were discussed in Congress, upon the authority of Thomas Paine, Governeur Morris argued for the latter's removal from his office, on the ground that the honour due to the nation's ally was involved, while the incumbent had no social or personal claims—but was an adventurer. This was a statement of the case as it would appear to a European spectator, at a time when few in our country's councils

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had the perspicacity to take such a view. Personal ill-will, growing out of a newspaper controversy, has, indeed, been charged upon the legislator in this instance ; but this does not correspond with the efforts he subsequently made in France for Paine's liberation, when the latter was far more degraded and in peril of his life.

Although, as we have seen, the views of Governeur Morris were comprehensive, they were also eminently practical. He was one of those efficient philosophers who understand the actual worth of abstract truth, and know intuitively how far it can be applied to human affairs with utility and satisfaction. In our day, there has been exhibited a mischievous fanaticism which advocates the realization of what is abstractly right and true, without any regard to existent circumstances. Similar principles, carried out by violence, occasioned the most dreadful results of the French Revolution; and there are always disciples enough of any doctrine, the espousal of which secures notoriety, however obviously detrimental it may be to the welfare of humanity, and the permanent interests of liberty or truth. The practical wisdom of Governeur Morris was early manifested in his financial essays ; and appears conspicuously in his revolutionary writings and speeches ; it induced him to warn Lafayette of Mirabeau, to suggest the basis of a popular constitution to Louis, and to co-operate with Clinton in his grand plans of internal improvement, upon which rest the prosperity of their native state. Time has

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proved the feasibility of his large practical conceptions, political and commercial; his genius for affairs has seldom been surpassed; and its evidences are yet apparent though comparatively unacknowledged.

With this breadth of purpose and fertility of thought, there, however, blended a peremptory manner which sometimes led Governeur Morris to check garrulity with a lofty impatience, and also imparted a somewhat dictatorial tone to his intercourse. With his frankness, too, there was united a certain love of discipline and courtly dignity that were not always pleasing to the ultra democratic among his countrymen. With the local prejudice and social conformity of New England, he had no sympathy, but seems to have inherited the dislike of Yankee customs and modes of feeling, which induced his father to prohibit his children, by will, a New England education. The elements of humanity were liberally dispensed to him. He did not live exclusively in his intellect and public spirit; but was a genuine lover of ease and pleasure, had a natural taste for elegance and luxury, and knew how to enjoy as well as how to work. Throughout the most active part of his life, however, he never allowed the one function to infringe upon the other.

It has been justly said of him, that "he never shrunk from any task; and never commenced one which he left unfinished." Indeed, his faculty consisted mainly in a rare power of concentration. He could converge the light of his mind and the force of his emotions, at

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will; and therefore, whether business or pleasure enlisted him, the result was never equivocal. His moral power was integrity; he was direct, open, sincere, a thorough, uncompromising and zealous devotee of truth in philosophy, social relations, and life. Hence his courage, self-respect, and simplicity—rendering him altogether a fine specimen of a republican gentleman. His commanding figure, expressive features, and strong, emphatic articulation, combined as they were with superior intellectual gifts, justify Madame de Staël's remark to him—*Monsieur, vous avez l'air tres imposant.*

He was equally at home when absorbed in abstruse inquiries and conviviality, amusement and study, utility and agreeableness; and possessed that completeness of nature which is essential to manhood. His generosity was evinced in numerous and unostentatious services to the unfortunate; and his letter to a tory friend, who desired to return to America, breathes the true spirit of magnanimity. He drafted the Constitution of the United States. Never being solicitous for the credit due to his patriotic labours, many services are claimed, in his behalf by his friends, which nominally belong to those with whom he was associated in public life. He often expressed the conviction that his own mind was more indebted for lucid and reliable principles of judgment and action to Robert H. Morris than to any other friend. Having married a niece of John Randolph, the latter was often his guest,

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and the keen encounters which would naturally occur between two such emphatic yet opposite characters, may readily be imagined.

The manner in which his marriage occurred is an instance of that eccentricity to which we have alluded as indicating the originality and independence which marked his private not less than his public life. He had invited a large number of his relatives to a Christmas dinner, and, having greeted them all with his usual hospitality, left the room, and soon returned with his intended bride and a clergyman, who instantly performed the marriage ceremony, to the astonishment of all the guests, and the disappointment of those among them who expected to inherit the estate.

His behaviour, when the accident occurred by which he lost his leg, was equally characteristic. While in attendance upon Congress, in Philadelphia, his horses having taken fright in consequence of some disturbance in the street, he was thrown from his phaeton, and so severely injured in the knee-joint, that amputation of the lower limb was deemed necessary. He conversed not only with calmness but with humour over his misfortune; and told the experienced surgeons that they had already sufficient reputation, and he preferred giving the operation to a young medical friend, that he might have the credit of it to advance his practice. When abroad he tried several very artistic substitutes for his lost member; but naturally impatient of deception, even in costume, he continued to use a stump

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attached to the fractured leg, and managed to accommodate his locomotion to this inconvenience without in the least impairing the dignity of his carriage. Indeed, it served him an excellent purpose on one occasion, for the cry of "aristocrat!" being raised against him in the streets of Paris, for appearing in his carriage, when no such vehicles were allowed by the mob—he was surrounded by a blood-thirsty crowd, who threatened his life; but he coolly thrust his wooden leg out of the window, and cried out—"An aristocrat? Yes; who lost his limb in the cause of American liberty!" The reaction was instantaneous; he was not only allowed to proceed, but vehemently cheered on his way.

He had an old-fashioned but impressive manner of expressing himself, which, though at this day it might be considered somewhat ostentatious, accorded with the large canes and buttons, the broad-skirted coats and stately air in vogue when Copley's portraits truly represented the style of character and taste in dress that prevailed. A genuine Knickerbocker, in whose now ripe memory Governeur Morris is the ideal of an American civilian, imitates with great effect, the tone, at once significant and dignified, with which he asked a pretentious literary aspirant who apologized for being late at dinner, by stating he had been engaged in forming a philosophical society—"Pray, where are your philosophers?" and his reply to a friend who asked his son then a boy of four years old if he

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had yet read Robinson Crusoe and Jack the Giant Killer? "Tell the gentleman—no; but that you are acquainted with the lives of Gustavus Adolphus, and Charles of Sweden—the Twelfth."

There was a vein of what has been called Johnsonese in the rhetoric of Governeur Morris, but it was underlaid by so much strong natural sense, and, in his deliberate efforts, vivified by such true enthusiasm, that it seemed quite appropriate to the man. He had all the requisites to sustain daring oratory. With a taste formed chiefly upon the French pulpit-eloquence, in its palmy days, his indulgence in personification—as when he invoked the shade of Penn, in a speech in Philadelphia—and especially in the apostrophes of his funeral orations, a man of less natural dignity and impressiveness, would have been in imminent danger of gliding from the sublime to the ridiculous; but there was a singular unity of effect in the elocution of Governeur Morris. Intelligent crowds hung in silent admiration upon his eloquence; and servants stopped open-mouthed, dish in hand, to catch his table-talk. His social privileges were not less rich than various; and he enjoyed the signal advantages of that companionship with superior natures, which is quickened and sustained by mutual duties and genuine intellectual sympathy. It was his rare fortune to be intimate with the leading spirits of two nations, at epochs of social and political convulsion, which brought to the surface and into action the gifts and

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graces, as well as the passions of humanity. At home the esteemed associate of Schuyler, Greene, and the other brave chiefs of the army; of Hamilton, Clinton, and all the eminent civic leaders of his time; the correspondent of public characters, embracing every species of distinction from that of Paul Jones to that of Thomas Jefferson; and abroad, on terms of the frankest intercourse with Necker and his gifted daughter, Marmontel, and the family of Orleans, he had the best opportunity to estimate the comparative benefits of fortune, rank, genius, society, form of government, modes of life, and principles of nature.

His relation to Washington was of a kind that affords the best evidence of his worth. Their correspondence evidences the highest degree of mutual respect and confidence; their views on public affairs are developed with an intelligent frankness and unanimity of sentiment, pleasing to contemplate; while the geniality of friendship incidentally appears in the "pigs and poultry" sent from Morrissiana to Mount Vernon; the commission Washington gave his former counsellor, to purchase him a watch: and the candid letter of advice he wrote him on his appointment as minister to France. There was something kindred in the tone of both, however dissimilar in their endowments and career; and in form so much were they alike that Governeur Morris, when in Paris, stood for the figure of Hudson's statue of Washington. Notwithstanding the florid style of portions of the eulogy delivered on

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his beloved chief, at the public funeral in New York, Governeur Morris drew his character with great discrimination.

It is said that a convivial party to which Washington was invited, his remarkable traits were the subject of earnest discussion among the company; and it was insisted that no one, however intimate, would dare to take a liberty with him. In a foolish moment of elation, Governeur Morris accepted a bet that he would venture upon the experiment. Accordingly, just before dinner was announced, as the guests stood in a group by the fire, he induced a somewhat lively chat, and in the midst of it, apparently from a casual impulse, clapped Washington familiarly on the shoulder. The latter turned and gave him a look of such mild and dignified yet grieved surprise, that even the self-possession of his friend deserted him. He shrunk from that gaze of astonishment at his forgetfulness of respect; and the mirth of the company was instantly awed into silence. It is curious with this scene fresh in the mind, to revert to a passage in the eulogy to which we have referred: "You all have felt the reverence he inspired; it was such that to command seemed in him but the exercise of an ordinary function, while others felt that a duty to obey (anterior to the injunctions of civil ordinance or the compulsions of a military code) was imposed by the high behests of nature."

The quality which all history shows to be the basis of character is self-reliance. United with generosity

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and remarkable intelligence, this trait gives directness, force, and authority to the manner, word, and thought. We trace to this combination much of the energy of GoverneurMorris, and not a little of his social influence. Although, at times, his confidence in his own opinion and moods, degenerated into complacency and even offensive dogmatism—these were the extreme phases of an invaluable quality. The very same trust in his own resources and the deliberate convictions of his understanding, in the hour of earnest and momentous discussion, gave a profound emphasis to his discourse that won his audience; and, in the hour of baffled endeavour and mortified hope, enabled him to impart vital encouragement to the desponding adherents of a glorious cause. In the society of rank and genius, it also endowed him, as the representative of liberal principles, with a dignity that met unawed the gaze of an opponent, and enabled him to estimate at their just value the grandeur and blandishments that subdue or captivate those not thus fortified.

The men who thus exert a great and benign personal influence usually combine will, intellect, and disinterestedness in their characters; the two former in various proportions, but the latter always in an eminent degree. It is to such a union of high qualities that we ascribe the accurate and extensive insight for which such men are remarkable. Selfish instincts are proverbially short-sighted; and the first requisite for comprehensive views is a position elevated above the

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level of private interest; it is thus that the love of knowledge in the man of science and the enthusiasm for beauty in the poet and artist—lift them into a region where what is petty, commonplace, and material vanish in a limitless perspective. The same result is born of wide and intelligent sympathies—enlisting the feelings in enlarged social enterprises, the will in noble social reforms, and the mind in contemplations that embrace the welfare of nations and the good of humanity. In a field of action so often perverted to mere aggrandizement, as that of politics, the presence of a thoroughly honest, wise, and ardent humanitarian, like Governeur Morris, is a spectacle that exalts our common nature. It affects us like an acted poem, and realizes in life the moral romance of history.

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THE PROSE POET:

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE.

I PASSED an hour lately in examining various substances through a powerful microscope, with a man of science at my elbow, to expound their use and relations. It was astonishing what revelations of wonder and beauty in common things were thus attained in a brief period. The eye amply directed, the attention wisely given, and the minute in nature enlarged and unfolded to the vision, a new sense of life and its marvels seemed created. What appeared but a slightly rough surface proved variegated iris-hued crystals; a dot on a leaf became a moth's nest with its symmetrical eggs and their hairy pent-house: the cold passive oyster displayed heart and lungs in vital activity: the unfolding wings grew visible upon the seed-vessels of the ferns; beetles looked like gorgeously emblazoned shields; and the internal economy of the nauseous cock-roach, in its high and delicate organism, showed a remarkable affinity between insect and animal life.

What the scientific use of lenses—the telescope and

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the microscope—does for us in relation to the external universe, the psychological writer achieves in regard to our own nature. He reveals its wonder and beauty, unfolds its complex laws, and makes us suddenly aware of the mysteries within and around individual life. In the guise of attractive fiction and sometimes of the most airy sketches, Hawthorne thus deals with his reader. His appeal is to consciousness, and he must, therefore, be met in a sympathetic relation; he shadows forth hints, makes signs, whispers, muses aloud, gives the key-note of melody, puts us on a track; in a word, addresses us as nature does—that is, unostentatiously, and with a significance not to be realized without reverent silence and gentle feeling; a sequestration from bustle and material care, and somewhat of the meditative insight and latent sensibility in which his themes are conceived and wrought out.

Sometimes they are purely descriptive bits of Flemish painting, so exact and arrayed in such mellow colours, that we unconsciously take them in as objects of sensitive rather than imaginative observation; the "Old Manse" and the "Custom-house"—those quaint portals to his fairy-land, as peculiar and rich in contrast in their way, as Boccaccio's sombre introduction to his gay stories, are memorable instances of this fidelity in the details of local and personal portraiture; and that chaste yet deep tone of colouring which secures an harmonious whole.

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Even in allegory, Hawthorne imparts this sympathetic unity to his conception; "Fire Worship," "The Celestial Railroad," "Monsieur du Miroir," "Earth's Holocaust," and others in the same vein, while they emphatically indicate great moral truth, have none of the abstract and cold grace of allegorical writing; besides the ingenuity they exhibit, and the charm they have for the fancy, a human interest warms and gives them meaning to the heart. On the other hand, the imaginative grace which they chiefly display, lends itself quite as aptly to redeem and glorify homely fact in the plastic hands of the author. "Drowne's Wooden Image," "The Intelligence Office," and other tales derived from common-place material, are thus moulded into artistic beauty and suggestiveness.

Hawthorne is a prose-poet. He brings together scattered beauties, evokes truth from apparent confusion, and embodies the tragic or humorous element of a tradition or an event in lyric music—not, indeed, to sung by the lips, but to live, like melodious echoes, in the memory. We are constantly struck with the felicity of his invention. What happy ideas are embodied in "A Virtuoso's Collection," and "The Artist of the Beautiful"—independent of the grace of their execution! There is a certain uniformity in Hawthorne's style and manner, but a remarkable versatility in his subjects; and each as distinctly carries with it the monotone of a special feeling or fancy, as one of

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Miss Baillie's plays: — and this is the perfection of psychological art.

There are two distinct kinds of fiction, or narrative literature, which for want of more apt terms, we may call the melo-dramatic and the meditative; the former is in a great degree mechanical, and deals chiefly with incidents and adventure; a few types of character, an approved scenic material and what are called effective situations, make up the story; the other species, on the contrary, is modelled upon no external pattern, but seems evolved from the author's mind, and tinged with his idiosyncracy; the circumstances related are often of secondary interest; while the sentiment they unfold, the picturesque or poetic light in which they are placed, throw an enchantment over them. We feel the glow of individual consciousness even in the most technical description; we recognize a significance beyond the apparent, in each character; and the effect of the whole is that of life rather than history: we inhale an atmosphere as well as gaze upon a landscape; the picture offered to the mental vision has not outline and grouping, but colour and expression, evincing an intimate and sympathetic relation between the moral experience of the author and his work, so that, as we read, not only scenes but sensations, not only fancies but experience, seem borne in from the entrancing page.

There is a charm also essential to all works of

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genius which for want of a more definite term we are content to call the ineffable. It is a quality that seems to be infused through the design of the artist after its mechanical finish—as life entered the statue at the prayer of the Grecian sculptor. It is a secret, indescribable grace, a vital principle, a superhuman element imparting the distinctive and magnetic character to literature, art and society, which gives them individual life; it is what the soul is to the body, luminous vapour to the landscape, wind to sound, and light to colour.

No analysis explains the phenomenon; it is recognized by consciousness rather than through direct intellectual perception; and seems to appeal to a union of sensibility and insight which belongs, in the highest degree, only to appreciative minds. Its mysterious, endearing and conservative influence, hallows all works universally acknowledged as those of genius in the absolute significance of the word; and it gives to inanimate forms, the written page, the composer's harmony, and the lyric or dramatic personation, a certain pervading interest which we instantly feel disarming criticism and attesting the presence of what is allied to our deepest instincts. It touches the heart with tender awe before a Madonna of Raphael; it thrilled the nerves and evoked the passions in the elocution of Kean; it lives in the expression of the Apollo, in the characters of Shakspeare, and the atmospheres of Claude; and those once initiated by

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experience, know spontaneously the invisible line of demarcation which separates talent, skill and knowledge from genius by the affinity of impression invariably produced:—a distinction as clearly felt and as difficult to portray as that between the emotions of friendship and love. It would appear as if there was a provision in the minds of the highly gifted similar to that of nature in her latent resources; whereby they keep in reserve a world of passion, sentiment and ideas, unhackneyed by casual use and unprofaned by reckless display—which is secretly lavished upon their mental emanations:—hence their moral life, intense personality, and sympathetic charm.

Such a process and result is obviously independent of will and intelligence; what they achieve is thus crowned with light and endowed with vitality by a grace above their sphere; the ineffable, then, is a primary distinction and absolute token of genius; like the halo that marks a saintly head. Results like these are only derived from the union of keen observation with moral sensibility; they blend like form and colour, perspective and outline, tone and composition in art. They differ from merely clever stories in what may be called flavour. There is a peculiar zest about them which proves a vital origin; and this is the distinction of Hawthorne's tales. They almost invariably possess the reality of tone which perpetuates imaginative literature;—the same that endears to all time De Foe, Bunyan, Goldsmith,

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and the old dramatists. We find in pictorial art that the conservative principle is either absolute fidelity to detail as in the Flemish, or earnest moral beauty as in the Italian school; the painters who yet live in human estimation were thoroughly loyal either to the real or the ideal—to perception or to feeling, to the eye or the heart. And, in literature, the same thing is evident. "Robinson Crusoe" is objectively, and "Pilgrim's Progress" spiritually, true to nature; the "Vicar of Wakefield" emanated from a mind overflowing with humanity; and it is the genuine reproduction of passion in the old English plays that makes them still awaken echoes in the soul.

It may be regarded as a proof of absolute genius to create a mood; to inform, amuse, or even interest is only the test of superficial powers sagaciously directed; but to infuse a new state of feeling, to change the frame of mind, and, as it were, alter the consciousness—this is the triumph of all art. It is that mysterious influence which beauty, wit, character, nature and peculiar scenes and objects exert, which we call fascination, a charm, an inspiration or a glamour, according as it is good or evil. It may safely be asserted that by virtue of his individuality every author and artist of genius creates a peculiar mood, differing somewhat according to the character of the recipient, yet essentially the same. If we were obliged to designate that of Hawthorne in a

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single word, we should call it metaphysical, or perhaps soulful. He always takes us below the surface and beyond the material; his most inartificial stories are eminently suggestive; he makes us breathe the air of contemplation, and turns our eyes inward. It is as if we went forth, in a dream, into the stillness of an autumnal wood, or stood alone in a vast gallery of old pictures, or moved slowly, with muffled tread, over a wide plain, amid a gentle fall of snow, or mused on a ship's deck, at sea, by moonlight; the appeal is to the retrospective, the introspective to what is thoughtful and profoundly conscious in our nature, and whereby it communes with the mysteries of life and occult intimations of nature.

And yet there is no painful extravagance, no transcendental vagaries in Hawthorne; his imagination is as human as his heart; if he touches the horizon of the infinite, it is with reverence: if he deals with the anomalies of sentiment, it is with intelligence and tenderness. His utterance too is singularly clear and simple; his style only rises above the colloquial in the sustained order of its flow; the terms are natural, and fitly chosen. Indeed a careless reader is liable continually to lose sight of his meaning and beauty, from the entire absence of pretension in his style. It is requisite to bear in mind the universal truth, that all great and true things are remarkable for simplicity; the direct method is the pledge of sincerity, avoidance of the con-

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ventional, an instinct of richly-endowed minds; and the perfection of art never dazzles or overpowers, but gradually wins and warms us to an enduring and noble love. The style of Hawthorne is wholly inevasive; he resorts to no tricks of rhetoric or verbal ingenuity; language is to him a crystal medium through which to let us see the play of his humour, the glow of his sympathy, and the truth of his observation.

Although he seldom transcends the limited sphere in which he so efficiently concentrates his genius, the variety of tone, like different airs on the same instrument, gives him an imaginative scope rarely obtained in elaborate narrative. Thus he deals with the tragic element, wisely and with vivid originality, in such pieces as "Roger Malvern's Burial" and "Young Goodman Browne;" with the comic in "Mr. Higginbotham's Catastrophe," "A Select Party," and Dr. Heidegger's Experiment," and with the purely fanciful in "David Swan," "The Vision of the Fountain," and "Fancy's Show Box." Nor is he less remarkable for sympathetic observation of nature than for profound interest in humanity; witness such limning as the sketches entitled "Buds and Bird Voices," and "Snow-Flakes"—genuine descriptive poems; though not cast in the mould of verse, as graphic, true and feeling as the happiest scenes of Bryant or Crabbe. With equal tact and tenderness he approaches the dry record of the past, imparting life to its cold details, and reality to its abstract forms.

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The early history of New England has found no such genial and vivid illustrations as his pages afford. Thus, at all points, his genius touches the interests of human life, now overflowing with a love of external nature, as gentle as that of Thomson, now intent upon the quaint or characteristic in life with a humour as zestful as that of Lamb, now developing the horrible or pathetic with something of Webster's dramatic terror, and again buoyantwith a fantasy as aërial as Shelley's conceptions. And, in each instance, the staple of charming invention is adorned with the purest graces of style. This is Hawthorne's distinction. We have writers who possess in an eminent degree each of these two great requisites of literary success, but no one who more impressively unites them; cheerfulness, as if caught from the sea-breeze or the green fields, solemnity, as if imbibed from the twilight, like colours on a palette, seem transferable at his will, to any legend or locality he chooses for a framework whereon to rear his artistic creation; and this he does with so dainty a touch and so fine a disposition of light and shade, that the result is like an immortal cabinet picture —the epitome of a phase of art, and the miniature reflection of a glorious mind.

Boccaccio in Italy, Marmontel in France, Hoffman and others in Germany, and Andersen in Denmark, have made the tale or brief story classical in their several countries; and Hawthorne has achieved the same triumph in America. He has performed for New

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England life and manners, the same high and sweet service which Wilson has for Scotland—caught and permanently embodied their "lights and shadows."

Brevity is as truly the soul of romance as of wit; the light that warms is always concentrated; and expression and finish, in literature as in painting, are not dependent upon space. Accordingly the choicest gems of writing are often the most terse; and as a perfect lyric or sonnet outweighs in value a mediocre epic or tragedy, so a carefully worked and a richly conceived sketch, tale, or essay is worth scores of diffuse novels and ponderous treatises. It is a characteristic of standard literature, both ancient and modern, thus to condense the elements of thought and style. Like the compact and well-knit frame, vivacity, efficiency, and grace result from thus bringing the rays of fancy and reflection to a focus. It gives us the essence, the flower, the vital spirit of mental enterprise; it is a wise economy of resources, and often secures permanent renown by distinctness of impression unattained in efforts of great range. We, therefore, deem one of Hawthorne's great merits a sententious habit, a concentrated style. He makes each picture complete and does not waste an inch of canvas. Indeed the unambitious length of his tales is apt to blind careless readers to their artistic unity and suggestiveness; he abjures quantity, while he refines upon quality.

A rare and most attractive quality of Hawthorne, as we have already suggested, is the artistic use of

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familiar materials. The imagination is a wayward faculty, and writers largely endowed with it, have acknowledged that they could expatiate with confidence only upon themes hallowed by distance. It seems to us less marvellous that Shakspeare peopled a newly-discovered and half-traditional island with such new types of character as Ariel and Caliban; we can easily reconcile ourselves to the enchanting impossibilities of Arabian fiction; and the superstitious fantasies of northern romance have a dream-like reality to the natives of the temperate zone. To clothe a familiar scene with ideal interest, and exalt things to which our senses are daily accustomed, into the region of imaginative beauty and genuine sentiment, requires an extraordinary power of abstraction and concentrative thought.

Authors in the old world have the benefit of antiquated memorials which give to the modern cities a mysterious though often disregarded charm; and the very names of Notre Dame, the Rialto, London Bridge, and other time-hallowed localities, take the reader's fancy captive, and prepares him to accede to any grotesque or thrilling narrative that may be associated with them. It is otherwise in a new and entirely practical country; the immediate encroaches too steadily on our attention; we can scarcely obtain a perspective:—

> "Life treads on life and heart on heart—
> We press too close in church and mart,
> To keep a dream or grave apart."

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Yet with a calm gaze, a serenity and fixedness of musing that no outward bustle can disturb and no power of custom render hackneyed, Hawthorne takes his stand—like a foreign artist in one of the old Italian cities, before a relic of the past or a picturesque glimpse of nature, and loses all consciousness of himself and the present, in transferring its features and atmosphere to canvas. In our view the most remarkable trait in his writings is this harmonious blending of the common and familiar in the outward world, with the mellow and vivid tints of his own imagination. It is with difficulty that his maturity of conception and his finish and geniality of style link themselves in our minds, with the streets of Boston and Salem, the Province House, and even the White Mountains; and we congratulate every New Englander with a particle of romance, that, in his native literature, "a local habitation and a name" has thus been given to historical incidents and localities; that art has enshrined what of tradition hangs over her brief career; as characteristic and as desirable thus to consecrate, as any legend or spot, German or Scottish genius has redeemed from oblivion.

The "Wedding Knell," the "Gentle Boy," the "White Old Maid," the "Ambitious Guest," the "Shaker Bridal," and other New England subjects, as embodied and glorified by the truthful, yet imaginative and graceful, heart of Hawthorne, adequately

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represent in literature native traits, and this will ensure their ultimate appreciation. But the most elaborate effort of this kind, and the only one, in fact, which seems to have introduced Hawthorne to the whole range of American readers, is "The Scarlet Letter." With all the care in point of style and authenticity which marks his lighter sketches, this genuine and unique romance may be considered as an artistic exposition of Puritanism as modified by New England colonial life. In truth to costume, local manners, and scenic features, the Scarlet Letter is as reliable as the best of Scott's novels; in the anatomy of human passion and consciousness it resembles the most effective of Balzac's illustrations of Parisian or provincial life, while in developing bravely and justly the sentiment of the life it depicts, it is as true to humanity as Dickens.

Beneath its picturesque details and intense characterization, there lurks a profound satire. The want of soul, the absence of sweet humanity, the predominance of judgment over mercy, the tyranny of public opinion, the look of genuine charity, the asceticism of the Puritan theology, the absence of all recognition of natural laws, and the fanatic substitution of the letter for the spirit, which darken and harden the spirit of the pilgrims to the soul of a poet are shadowed forth with a keen, stern and eloquent, yet indirect emphasis that haunts us like "the cry of the human." Herein is evident and palpable the latent

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power which we have described as the most remarkable trait of Hawthorne's genius ; the impression grows more significant as we dwell upon the story ; the states of mind of the poor clergymen, Hester Chillingworth, and Penil, being as it were transferred to our bosoms through the sympathies their vivid delineation excites ; they seem to conflict, and glow and deepen and blend in our hearts, and finally work out a great moral problem. It is as if we were baptized into the consciousness of Puritan life, of New England character in its elemental state ; and knew, by experience, all its frigidity, its gloom, its intellectual enthusiasm, and its religious aspiration.

"The House of the Seven Gables" is a more elaborate and harmonious realization of these characteristics. The scenery, tone, and personages of the story are imbued with a local authenticity which is not, for an instant, impaired by the imaginative charm of romance. We seem to breathe, as we read, the air and be surrounded by the familiar objects of a New England town. The interior of the House, each article described within it, from the quaint table to the miniature by Malbone ; every product of the old garden, the street-scenes that beguile the eyes of poor Clifford, as he looks out of the arched window, the noble elm and the ginger-bread figures at the little shop-window—all have the significance that belong to reality when seized upon by art. In these details we have the truth, simplicity, and exact

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imitation of the Flemish painters. So life-like in the minutiæ and so picturesque in general effect are these sketches of still-life, that they are daguerreotyped in the reader's mind, and form a distinct and changeless background, the light and shade of which give admirable effect to the action of the story; occasional touches of humour, introduced with exquisite tact, relieve the grave undertone of the narrative, and form vivacious and quaint images which might readily be transferred to canvas—so effectively are they drawn in words; take, for instance, the street-musician and the Pyncheon fowls, the Judge balked of his kiss over the counter, Phœbe reading to Clifford in the garden, or the old maid in her lonely chamber, gazing on the sweet lineaments of her unfortunate brother.

Nor is Hawthorne less successful in those pictures that are drawn exclusively for the mind's eye, and are obvious to sensation rather than the actual vision. Were a New England Sunday, breakfast, old mansion, easterly storm, or the morning after it clears, ever so well described? The skill in atmosphere we have noted in his lighter sketches, is also as apparent: around and within the principal scene of this romance, there hovers an alternating melancholy and brightness which is born of genuine moral life; no contrasts can be imagined of this kind, more eloquent to a sympathetic mind than that between the inward consciousness and external appearance of Hepzibah or Phœbe and Clifford, or the Judge. They respectively

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symbolize the poles of human existence; and are fine studies for the psychologist. Yet this attraction is subservient to fidelity to local characteristics. Clifford represents, though in its most tragic imaginable phase, the man of fine organization and true sentiments environed by the material realities of New England life; his plausible uncle is the type of New England selfishness, glorified by respectable conformity and wealth; Phœbe is the ideal of genuine, efficient, yet loving female character in the same latitude; Uncle Venner we regard as one of the most fresh, yet familiar portraits in the book: all denizens of our eastern provincial towns must have known such a philosopher; and Holdgrave embodies Yankee acuteness and hardihood redeemed by integrity and enthusiasm. The contact of these most judiciously selected and highly characteristic elements brings out not only many beautiful revelations of nature, but elucidates interesting truth; magnetism and socialism are admirably introduced; family tyranny in its most revolting form is powerfully exemplified; the distinction between a mental and a heartfelt interest in another, clearly unfolded; and the tenacious and hereditary nature of moral evil impressively shadowed forth. The natural refinements of the human heart, the holiness of a ministry of disinterested affection, the gracefulness of the homeliest services when irradiated by cheerfulness and benevolence, are illustrated with singular beauty.

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"He," says our author, speaking of Clifford, "had no right to be a martyr; and, beholding him so fit to be happy, and so feeble for all other purposes, a generous, strong and noble spirit, would, methinks, have been ready to sacrifice what little enjoyment it might have planned for itself,—*it would have flung down the hopes so paltry in its regard—if thereby the wintry blasts of our rude sphere might come tempered to such a man:*" and elsewhere: "Phœbe's presence made a home about her, — that very sphere which the outcast, the prisoner, the potentate, the wretch beneath mankind, the wretch aside from it, or the wretch above it, instinctively pines after —a home. She was real! Holding her hand, you felt something; a tender something; a substance and a warm one; *and so long as you could feel its grasp, soft as it was, you might be certain that your place was good in the whole sympathetic chain of human nature.* The world was no longer a delusion."

Thus narrowly, yet with reverence, does Hawthorne analyze the delicate traits of human sentiment and character; and opens vistas into that beautiful and unexplored world of love and thought, that exists in every human being, though overshadowed by material circumstance and technical duty. This, as we have before said, is his great service; digressing every now and then, from the main drift of his story, he takes evident delight in expatiating on phases of character and general traits of life, or in bringing

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into strong relief the more latent facts of consciousness. Perhaps the union of the philosophic tendency with the poetic instinct is the great charm of his genius. It is common for American critics to estimate the interest of all writings by their comparative glow, vivacity and rapidity of action: somewhat of the restless temperament and enterprising life of the nation infects its taste: such terms as 'quiet,' 'gentle,' and 'tasteful,' are equivocal when applied in this country, to a book; and yet they may envelope the rarest energy of thought and depth of insight as well as earnestness of feeling: these qualities, in reflective minds, are too real to find melo-dramatic development; they move as calmly as summer waves, or glow as noiselessly as the firmament; but not the less grand and mighty is their essence; to realize it, the spirit of contemplation, and the recipient mood of sympathy must be evoked, for it is not external but moral excitement that is proposed; and we deem one of Hawthorne's most felicitous merits, that of so patiently educing artistic beauty and moral interest from life and nature, without the least sacrifice of intellectual dignity.

The healthy spring of life is typified in Phœbe so freshly as to magnetize the feelings as well as engage the perceptions of the reader; its intellectual phase finds expression in Holgrave, while the state of Clifford, when relieved of the nightmare that

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oppressed his sensitive temperament, the author justly compares to an Indian summer of the soul. Across the path of these beings of genuine flesh and blood, who constantly appeal to our most humane sympathies, or rather around their consciousness and history, flits the pale mystic figure of Alice, whose invisible music and legendary fate overflow with a graceful and attractive superstition, yielding an Ariel-like melody to the more solemn and cheery strains of the whole composition. Among the apt though incidental touches of the picture, the idea of making the music-grinder's monkey an epitome of avarice, the daguerreotype a test of latent character, and the love of the reformer Holgrave for the genially practical Phœbe win him to conservatism, strike us as remarkably natural, yet quite as ingenious and charming as philosophical. We may add that the same pure, even unexaggerated and perspicuous style of diction that we have recognized in his previous writing, is maintained in this.

As earth and sky appear to blend at the horizon though we cannot define the point of contact; things seen and unseen, the actual and the spiritual, mind and matter, what is within and what is without our consciousness; have a line of union, and, like the colour of the iris, are lost in each other. About this equator of life the genius of Hawthorne delights to hover as its appropriate sphere; whether indulging a vein of Spenserian allegory, Hogarth sketching,

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Goldsmith domesticity, or Godwin metaphysics, it is around the boundary of the possible that he most freely expatiates; the realities and the mysteries of life to his vision are scarcely ever apart; they act and re-act so as to yield dramatic hints or vistas of sentiment. Time broods with touching solemnity over his imagination; the function of conscience awes while it occupies his mind; the delicate and the profound in love, and the awful beauty of death transfuse his meditation; and these supernal he loves to link with terrestrial influences, to hallow a graphic description by a sacred association, or to brighten a commonplace occasion with the scintillations of humour—thus vivifying or chastening the "light of common day."

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THE SUPERNATURALIST:

CHARLES BROCKDEN BROWN.

THE memoirs of distinguished men suggest to the philosopher the idea of a natural history of the human mind—so like the laws of instinct is the process of development in each species of character. The influence of climate, education, political and social institutions do not apparently modify the essential identity of genius; there is always a certain similarity in its experience, and a moral verisimilitude in its life; and the imprisoned poet of Ferrara, the domesticated bard of Olney, and the solitary cultivator of imaginative literature in America, as they are revealed to us in their familiar letters, and the anecdotes preserved of their habits and feelings, are distinguished by the same general characteristics. Thus with each, life began in vague but ardent dreams, intensity of personal consciousness, and indications of ability which induced those in authority to assign them the law as a career; in each case, their gentle and earnest spirits

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revolted from its technical drudgery and tergiversation; they alike were beset by Giant Despair in the form of bitter self-distrust and profound melancholy; and equally owed their temporary emancipation to mental activity and the indulgence of the affections; love and fame contended for the empire of their hearts, and finally achieved a kind of mutual victory and established a holy truce. The difference in renown is indeed great, but aspiration, insight, and the love of beauty dwelt in each of their souls, and found unequal but powerful expression. The contest with fortune, the unswerving assertion of individuality of purpose, the life of the mind and the loyalty of the heart, distinguish these widely-severed beings as they do the nobility of nature in all times and places.

It is an affecting reminiscence to look back half a century upon the enthusiastic American litterateur, delving at his self-imposed tasks alone, in the midst of a community absorbed in the pursuit of material well-being; throwing off his books with scarcely a breath of popularity to cheer his labour, and finding in the vocation for which his mind was adapted, a satisfaction that required not the spur of laudation to prompt habits of industry. We perceive in his writings germs, which under more cherishing influences would have expanded into glorious fruits, scintillations of an eclipsed dawn, breathings of a premature spring, the pledge and the promise, as well as the partial realization of original intellectual achievement.

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Charles Brockden Brown was the first American who manifested a decided literary genius in a form which has survived with anything like vital interest. His native fondness and capacity for literature is not only shown by his voluntary adoption of its pursuit at a time and in a country offering no inducement to such a career, but they are still more evident from the unpropitious social circumstances and local influences amid which he was born and bred. He was the son of a member of the Society of Friends in Philadelphia—a class distinguished, indeed, for moral worth, but equally remarkable for the absence of a sense of the beautiful, and a repudiation of the graces of life and the inspiration of sentiment, except that of a strictly religious kind.

It is obvious that Brockden Brown could have found little that was favourable to literary aspirations in his early years. Calm, prescriptive, and monotonous was the environment of his infancy, except that it richly yielded the gentle and sweet ministries of domestic ties and youthful companionship; sustained by these, he seems to have fallen back upon his individuality with that singleness of purpose characteristic of genius. He was a devoted student; and mental application soon made inroads upon his delicate constitution. By the counsel of his teacher, he acquired the habit of making long pedestrian excursions; and, in alternating between books and walks, his youth was passed: his ramblings, however, were usually without a companion; and thus

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in the solitude of nature, he was led to commune deeply with his own heart, indulge in fanciful reveries, and accustom himself to watch the action of the outward world upon his consciousness. He also became, from the same causes, abstracted in his habits of mind; and when the exigencies of practical life roused him from tasteful studies and romantic dreams to grapple with the perplexities and arid details of the law, he recoiled from the profession with the ardent feelings of a youth accustomed only to the agreeable fields of literature. He, however, persevered, and found consolation in the rhetorical exercises of a debating club, and those branches of the study, commenced at sixteen, that gave scope to his ingenuity and philosophical taste. To the disappointment of his friends, however, when admitted to the bar, he abandoned the idea of practice in disgust. Conscious perhaps of inconsistency and waywardness, yet tenacious of his obligation to follow the instinctive direction of his mind; the inactivity and hopeless prospect incident to such an entire change in his plan of life, occasioned, for awhile, the most painful depression of spirits.

Both his talents and sensibilities demanded a sphere, and their unemployed energy preyed upon his health and conscience. He sought relief in change of scene, and visited many parts of his own and the neighbouring states. Under a calm exterior and an apparent indifference of mood, he at this time suffered the most acute and despairing chagrin. His kindred and companions

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disapproved of his course and vainly remonstrated with him; and thus he not only failed to please those he loved, but was thoroughly dissatisfied with himself. In 1793 he visited New York, in order to unite with two fellow-students between whom and himself there existed a strong attachment. With them he formed a pleasant home; and soon joined the Friendly Club, of which Dunlap, Dr. Mitchell, Bleecker, Kent, and other choice spirits of the metropolis were active members. In their society his literary tastes revived, and his mental energies expanded. Sympathy quickened his confidence in his own resources, and he regained his cheerfulness and activity of spirit.

"Wieland" was published in 1798. It was the first work in the department of imaginative literature of native origin, possessing indisputable tokens of genius, which appeared in the United States. Its author died on the twenty-second of February, 1810, having just completed his thirty-ninth year. His subsequent fictions were unequal both to each other and to the first; but all contain traits of reflective power and invention that enlist the sympathies of the intellectual reader. They constitute, however, but a modicum of his literary labour. When he commenced authorship the discussions incident to the French Revolution were rife; and his active mind soon became excited on the subject of politics and social philosophy. His first published work—if we except occasional contributions to periodicals—was a Dialogue on the

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Rights of Woman, said to have been unsuccessful though ingenious; then followed the Memoirs of Carwin—the basis of his fictitious compositions and fame in this branch; but in the meantime, throughout his brief career, he was incessantly engaged in some kind of literary toil; editing the old American Monthly, the first American Review, the original Literary Magazine, and the American Register; compiling an elaborate geography; preparing architectural drawings; investigating various subjects; corresponding, translating Volney's work on the United States, and writing a series of political pamphlets. Although many of the questions thus treated have lost their significance and interest, the knowledge, logic, good sense, and general ability manifest in the political writings of Brockden Brown, are thought by some, not incompetent judges, to be as remarkable, in view of the period and circumstances, as his novels. It is certain that the two exhibit a rare combination of practical and imaginative capacity; and evince a mind disciplined and prolific as well as versatile: he could reason comprehensively and acutely on affairs as well as on emotion; and discuss the interests of commerce and government with as clear and full intelligence as the mysteries of love, remorse, and superstition. But it requires the consummate literary art of a Burke and a Godwin to preserve the carelessly-strewn jewels of such a mind in enduring caskets.

So deficient, indeed, in constructive design and

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unity of purpose are his writings, that, with the exception of his essays and other argumentative papers, they resemble the sketches that litter an artist's studio more than elaborate and finished works. His fictions might aptly be designated as studies in Romance. He left many fragmentary narratives, scenes and dialogues—some founded upon history, some upon observation, and others apparently the result of an inventive mood. At one time he had no less than five novels commenced, sketched out, or partially written. Architecture, geography, politics, and belles lettres, by turns, occupied his attention.

There is often in his letters a curious detail; and he possessed the art of making the recital of trifles interesting; while the logician and grave practical thinker, as well as the sincere and ardent patriot, are revealed by his spirited treatment of public questions. "Wieland" was the most powerful story that had appeared in the country; and the American Register, projected and commenced by Brown, was the most useful and appropriate literary undertaking in its day. Like most gifted men he won and retained affections with ease; he was the idol of the domestic circle, and loyal as well as magnanimous in friendship; he stood manfully by his comrades during the fearful ravages of the yellow fever; and his letters, while they aim to elicit the inmost experience and outward fortunes of those he loves, are remarkably self-forgetful. He lived wholly in his mind and affections; from a child devoted to

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books and maps, and, as a man, congratulating himself upon that fragility of body that destined him to meditative pursuits. Reading, clubs, pedestrianism, journalizing and earnest reflection were the means of his culture and development; like the author of the "Seasons," he was silent in mixed companies, but alert and expressive under genial mental excitement. An Utopian, he indulged in the most sanguine visions of the amelioration of society; a deep reasoner, he argued a question of law or government with subtlety and force; a devotee of truth, he ardently sought and carefully recorded facts; a wild dreamer, he gave the utmost scope to his fancy and the most intense exercise to his imagination; careless as to his appearance, unmethodical in affairs, intent upon the contemplative rather than the observant use of his faculties, he yet could summon all his powers at the call of love, duty, or taste, and bring them into efficient action. He describes his sensations at the first sight of the sea with the enthusiasm of Alfieri, and sums up an imaginary case, as president of a law society, with the grave reasoning of a Blackstone. The remarkable feature in his intellectual character was this union of analytical with imaginative power. So contented was he when his literary and domestic tastes were entirely gratified, as was the case during the last few years of his life, that he writes to one of his friends that the only thing which mars his felicity is the idea of its possible interruption. He fell into a gradual decline; and his

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wife declares that "he surrendered up not one faculty of his soul but with his last breath."

A prolific English novelist expressed his surprise at the discovery of what he called a tendency to supernaturalism in our people, having always regarded the American character as exclusively practical and matter-of-fact. It seems, however, that both individuals and communities are apt to develop in extremes; and that there is some occult affinity between the achieving faculty and the sense of wonder. Shakspeare has inwrought his grand superstitious creation amid vital energies of purpose and action; and thus brought into striking contrast the practical efficiency and spiritual dependence of our nature. The coincidence is equally remarkable whether it be considered as artistic ingenuity, or natural fact; and probably, as in other instances, the great dramatist was true to both motives. The more strictly utilitarian the life, the more keen, it would appear, is a zest for the marvellous; from that principle of reaction which causes a neglected element of the soul to assert itself with peculiar emphasis. No class of people are kept in more stern and continuous alliance with reality than sailors and the poor Irish; and yet among them fanciful superstition is proverbially rife. There is, therefore, no absolute incongruity between the most literal sagacity in affairs and outward experience, and a thorough recognition of the mysterious.

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The theological acumen and hardy intelligence of the New England colonists did not suffice against witchcraft and its horrible results; seers flourished among the shrewd Scotch, and gipsy fortune-telling in the rural districts of England. The faculty or sentiment to which these and other delusions appeal in our more cultivated era, finds scope and gratification in the revelations of science: and so nearly connected are the natural and supernatural, the seen and the unseen, the mysterious and the familiar, that a truly reverent and enlightened mind is often compelled to acknowledge that a sceptical and obstinate rationalism are as much opposed to truth as a visionary and credulous spirit. There is an intuitive as well as a reasoning faith; and presentiments, dreams, vivid reminiscence, and sympathetic phenomena, of which introspective natures are conscious, indicate to the calmest reflections that we are linked to the domain of moral experience and of destiny by more than tangible relations. Hence the receptive attitude of the highest order of minds in regard to spiritual theories, the consolation found in the doctrines of Swedenborg, and the obvious tendency that now prevails to interpret art, literature, and events according to an ideal or philosophical view.

It is a curious fact, in the history of American letters, that the genius of our literary pioneer was of this introspective order. If we examine the writings of Brown, it is evident that they only rise to high

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individuality in the analysis of emotion, and the description of states of mind. In other respects, though industrious, wise, and able, he is not impressively original; but in following out a metaphysical vein, in making the reader absolutely cognizant of the reverie, fears, hopes, imaginings that "puzzle the will," or concentrate its energies—he obeyed a singular idiosyncrasy of his nature, a Shaksperian tendency, and one, at that period, almost new as a chief element of fiction. The powerful use made of its entrancing spell by Godwin was the foundation of his fame; and it has been stated upon good authority, that Brown's mind was put upon the track by "Caleb Williams," and also that Godwin has been heard to allude to Brown as a suggestive writer in the same vein. The consciousness of the former was the great source of his intensity. He was one of those sensitive and thoughtful men who found infinite pleasure in the study of his own nature; and traced the course of a passion or the formation of a theory with a zest and acuteness similar to that with which a geologist investigates fossils and strata—delighting in that which suggests limitless relations, and touches the most expansive circle of human speculation. Mrs. Radcliffe understood how to excite the superstitious instinct, but it was by melo-dramatic and scenical rather than psychological means. In the process of Brown there is a more rational mystery; he bases his marvellous incidents upon

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some principle of truth or fact in science, and keeps interest alive by the effect on the sympathies or curiosity of his personages. He identifies himself with the working of their minds, and by casting his best descriptions in an autobiographical form, makes them more real through the personality of the narrative. He has been called an anatomist of the mind; and the peculiar nature of his genius may be inferred from the kind of influences under which he loved to depict human nature—such as the phenomena of Pestilence, in "Ormond" and "Arthur Mervyn," somnambulism, in "Edgar Huntley," and Ventriloquism, in "Wieland."

This love of the marvellous, as it is called, in its ordinary aspects, and recognition of the spiritual, as its higher phase may be defined, is common to the least cultivated and the most gifted of human beings. Whoever has considered the speculations of Shelley on dreams, the theories of Coleridge in regard to the action and reaction of life and the soul, or heard Allston tell a ghost story, must have been convinced that there is a natural provision for wonder as well as for reason in select intelligences. The art of dealing with this feeling, however, is one of the most subtle of inventions, that fatal step from the sublime to the ridiculous being constantly imminent. One reason that Brockden Brown succeeded was that a self-possessed intelligence, a reflective process goes on simultaneously before the reader's mind, with the

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scene of mystery or horror enacting; he cannot despise as weak the spectator or the victim that can so admirably portray his state of feeling and the current of his thoughts at such a crisis of fate; witness the description of the scene with a panther, and the defence of Wieland.

There is an association of the marvellous recorded by Dunlap, the friend and biographer of Brown, which links itself readily to this vein of the weird and adventurous he delighted to unfold. It appears his name of Brockden was derived from an English progenitor who nearly lost his life in consequence of overhearing a conspiracy, when a boy, against Charles the Second, and was sent to America to avoid the consequences; and there is manifest in the only lineal descendant of the novelist, the same passion for experiment in actual life which inspired the latter in the world of opinion and fancy. The vigour, directness, and energy of Brown's mind increased with discipline; for although his last novel is inferior to its predecessors, his last pamphlet is marked by great cogency and eloquence. His stock of knowledge, his range of observation, and his benign projects expanded with his years; and no judicious and kindly reader can examine his literary remains, and ponder the facts of his brief career, without sharing the grief of those who lamented his early death as a public not less than a personal misfortune.

Crudity seems the necessary condition of a nascent

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literature; and a large amount of excellent material exists, in a printed form, which is destined to be recast in a vital and artistic shape by the American author. Style is the conservative element of ideas and traditions; and the hasty manner in which many of our writers have produced even their best works; the absence of a high and nice standard of taste as well as of inspiring literary sympathy, accounts for the incomplete, unlaboured, and fugitive shape in which the national mind has chiefly developed. The exceptions to this general rule do not invalidate its prevalence; and the high finish which Irving, Longfellow, Hawthorne, and other American writers have bestowed on their productions, is in striking contrast with the unequal, careless, and fragmentary character of the average issues of the press.

In the case of Brown we have to regret the absence of careful revision and sustained labour. He opened a mine from which others have wrought images of more enduring beauty. Not anticipating any great result, conscious of toiling in an isolated field, and deprived of the encouragement to assiduous and refined toil which only warm and intelligent recognition affords, we cannot be surprised that he was satisfied to give utterance to his inventive talent, and indulge his personal taste, without striving to perpetuate their emanations. He wrote with great rapidity; his delicate organization forbade the prolonged endurance of mental glow; and, therefore, in almost every instance, his pages give indi-

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cations of weariness towards the close. Many of his works were written and printed simultaneously; he did not apparently realize that the vein of fiction in which he excelled could be worked up into a standard value or interest, but gave it vent without pausing to correct verbal inaccuracies or condense and polish the style.

He was capable of giving to his theme, the unity and finish of "The Sketch Book," the "Idle Man," or the "Scarlet Letter;" but he lived and wrote at a time and under influences in which such genial care received little praise; and we must look to the elements and not the form of his genius in order to do justice to his memory. The same kind of moral diagnosis, if we may use the phrase, which gives to Balzac's creations their singular hold upon the imagination, under the impulse of literary art, would have enshrined the name of the American novelist; he possessed as decided a love of exploring the very sources of affection, and dissecting character through all the convolutions of appearance. No one can read his novels without feeling that Brown was a psychologist as well as a scholar; and the critic of judgment and candour must admit that his perception of the intricate in mental processes, and the profound and the conflicting in human emotion, if embodied in a choice dramatic or elaborate narrative form, would have continued to interest like the tragedies of Joanna Baillie and the romances of Scott. As it is, we turn to our countryman's writings with that peculiar interest which belongs only to

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what is initiative; full of promise, and significant of beauty, truth, and power, in a transition or inadequately developed state. We trace the footsteps of genius ere they move with entire confidence, follow them in wayward paths; and turn, with curious sympathy, from the works of more fortunate, though not more richly endowed writers, to those early and original specimens.

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THE LITERARY STATESMAN:

MASSIMO D' AZEGLIO.

It is seldom that the noble aims and benign sentiments of the genuine artist find development in life. His efficiency, however refined and graceful in itself, rarely can be traced to a practical issue; his dominion is usually confined to the vague realms of thought, and his name familiar only to those who explore the world of fancy and ideas. A rare and beautiful exception to this abstract career of the artist in literature is now visible in the case of Massimo d' Azeglio, the present secretary of state of Sardinia. It has become his fortunate destiny to realize in action the dreams of his youth; to administer, to a certain extent at least, the principles which previously found only written expression; and to be the agent of some of the political and social ameliorations, which, at a less auspicious era, he could but suggest, illustrate, and prophesy. We can hardly imagine a more elevated satisfaction to a generous mind, than the privilege of thus making tangible what was once

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ideal, carrying into affairs the results of deliberate study, and giving social embodiment to long-cherished and patiently evolved truths. To feel the interest and realize the significance of such a career, we must compare the first work of the gifted novelist with the last discourse of the minister of foreign affairs; and trace his identity of opinion and sentiment, from the glowing patriotism of "Niccolò de' Lapi" and "Ettore Fieramosca" to the reforms which have rendered Sardinia the most free and progressive of the Italian states.

It is through his genuine patriotism, indeed, that D' Azeglio is both a popular writer and a liberal statesman; his fictions are derived from the same inspiration as his public acts; he is a man of the people, and an efficient and honoured citizen of Italy, by virtue of a love of country not less remarkable for intelligence than for sincerity. This is his great distinction. Neither to the circumstances of his birth, education, nor experience, is he indebted for the independence, wisdom, and zeal of his national feeling, but altogether to the promptings of a noble heart and vigorous understanding. This eminent trait, his intelligent patriotism, both of his character and his genius, is exhibited with beautiful consistency, first in an artistic, then in an argumentative, and finally in an administrative, manner. It pervades his life as well as his books, now finding utterance in the fervid works of an ancient Tuscan patriot, now in

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a direct and calm appeal to the reason of his contemporaries, and again in the salutary projects and unfaltering purpose of the ministerial reformer.

In the history of Sardinia, there are obvious facts and tendencies indicative of a liberal destiny;—vistas, as it were, of light athwart the gloom of despotic rule, and low and interrupted, yet audible, breathings of that spirit of liberty and national progress now evidently becoming more permanent and vital. The nucleus of the monarchy was Savoy, around which were grouped the fragments of several states,—the old kingdom of Burgundy and remains of the Carlovingian and Frankish empire; but towards the end of the thirteenth century its individuality was fixed by the will of Count Asmodeus the Sixth; and by the peace of Utrecht it became a state of Europe. Although the power of the crown was unlimited, the government was administered by three ministers, and the succession confined to the male line; the assent of the Estates was requisite for the imposition of new taxes, and, while the nobility formed a large class, it was not exempt from taxation. The traveller who visits the church of La Superga at Turin, and muses over her buried kings, will recall traits of royal character not unworthy of the superb mausoleum. In the forty-three years of his reign, Charles Emanuel the Third, both as a civic and military ruler, preserved a high character. In his disputes with the Pope, he successfully maintained the right of the state to make

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all ecclesiastical appointments; and the concordat was confirmed by Benedict the Fourteenth in 1742. The new code of 1770 was in advance of the times, and the country flourished under its provisions. But these incidental advantages were not sufficient to modify the natural influence of despotism upon the character of the people; and the acknowledged superiority of the Sardinians in vigour and breadth of nature is perhaps not less owing to local and social circumstances. Among these we are disposed to reckon the variety of elements that constitute the state; it combines interior plains with mountains and sea-coast,—the fertile levels of Asti and Alessandria, and the distant island of Sardinia; while Piedmont, as its name suggests, lies at the foot of the Pennine Alps, (in which are the Great Saint Bernard on her north,) and of the Grecian and Cottian Alps, including Mont Blanc and Mont Cenis, towards France and Savoy; and in the direction of the south are the Maritime Alps, separating it from Genoa and Nice.

Another propitious influence that distinguishes Piedmont is the existence of a large body of Protestants, whose contests with the Catholic power early broke up the monotony of prescriptive opinion, and tended to enlighten and invigorate the adjacent people. Milton's noble sonnet to the Waldenses of Piedmont is a familiar memorial of their heroism and sufferings; protected by their mountain barriers, they defeated the army of the Pope, who lost not less than seven hun-

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dred men in the struggle. The actual effect, however, of so complete a despotism as that which originally invested the territory, has been described in a vivid and graphic manner by another poet. Alfieri, in his ingenuous autobiography, gives us a melancholy picture of an education under royal authority. His fame is one of the redeeming associations that beguile the traveller at Turin.

In 1798, Charles Emanuel the Fourth ceded his whole territory to the French, with the exception of the island of Sardinia; and four years subsequently, abdicated in favour of his brother, who, upon his return after the peace of Paris in 1815, restored the old constitution as far as practicable, readmitted the Jesuits, subscribed to the Holy Alliance, and established a rigorous censorship. The next year, harassed by the occupation of his kingdom by the Austrians, he also resigned in favour of his brother, Charles Felix. The Congress of Vienna, in 1822, provided for the evacuation of foreign troops; but before three years had elapsed the usual enactments of arbitrary power crushed whatever germs of a liberal policy remained; by a royal edict, such of her inhabitants as were not possessed of at least four hundred dollars were forbidden to acquire the first elements of learning; and only those having a certain investment in the funds were allowed to enter the university. Translations of Goethe, Schiller, Wieland, and other authors were prohibited. From time to time, formid-

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able conspiracies against a government so tyrannical were discovered; the most important, that of 1821, was not without temporary success, since the regent, Charles Albert, was compelled to swear to the Spanish constitution. The spirit of the age and the lessons of experience were not altogether lost upon this prince, whose real character seems but recently to have been appreciated. We can desire no better evidence of his sincere love of country and benign projects, than the fact that, many years since, when comparative tranquillity prevailed in Europe, he was accustomed to hold long and confidential interviews with our representative at his court, for the purpose of eliciting information as to the means and method of gradually ameliorating the institutions, not only of Sardinia, but of Italy.

He long cherished the hope of giving her national unity, of combining from all her states an efficient army, and thus expelling the Austrians from the soil. This he believed to be the first step towards a constitutional government: popular education and military training he more or less encouraged in his own dominions, with this great ultimate object in view; and he certainly possessed the most efficient native troops, and the best-founded popularity, among the Italian princes. Since his death, impartial observers concur in deeming him far more unfortunate than treacherous; a reaction has justly taken place in the public estimation of his motives and career; and no candid inquirer can fail to recognise in him a brave

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ruler, who gave a decided impulse to liberal ideas, advanced the Italian cause, and became one of its involuntary martyrs.

"Yea, verily, Charles Albert has died well;
And if he lived not all so, as one spoke,
The sin passed softly with the passing-bell.
For he was shriven, I think, in cannon-smoke,
And, taking off his crown, made visible
A hero's forehead. Shaking Austria's yoke,
He shattered his own hand and heart. 'So best.'
His last words were, upon his lonely bed,—
'I do not end like popes and dukes at least,—
Thank God for it.' And now that he is dead,
Admitting it is proved and manifest
That he was worthy, with a discrowned head,
To measure heights with patriots, let them stand
Beside the man in his Oporto shroud,
And each vouchsafe to take him by the hand,
And kiss him on the cheek, and say aloud,
'Thou, too, hast suffered for our native land!
My brother, thou art one of us. Be proud!'" *

Into this amphibious country,—as Piedmont is quaintly called by the Italian tragic poet,—into this kingdom composed of the fragments of shattered dynasties, the scene of religious persecution, the heritage of a long line of brave and despotic kings, who adorned it with magnificent temples of religion by taxes wrung from an ignorant people and extorted from a pampered nobility,—into this romantic land, crowned with Alpine summits and indented with emerald vales,—a region memorable for many a hard-fought field, and which boasts the home of Rousseau, Alfieri, and Pellico,—Massimo d' Azeglio was born, on

* Mrs. Browning's "Casa Guidi Windows."

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the 2nd of October, 1798. His family was both ancient and noble; his native city was Turin, a capital so near the confines of France as to be more exposed to the influx of continental ideas than any other metropolis of the land. A more vigorous and intelligent race tread its streets, and a bolder peasantry dwell amid the mountains around, than belong to the sickly Campagna or the Lazzaroni shores: the soldier has a manlier bearing, and the priest a franker aspect; while in society, not only the language, but the enlightenment, of the French prevails. At the *cafés* you find more foreign journals, in the *salons* a less antediluvian tone; the mellow atmosphere of the past which broods over the more southern districts is here scarcely perceptible, and a certain modern air and freshness of life immediately strike the traveller from that direction, as he enters the Sardinian capital.

Here Azeglio's early education was strictly private; he then passed through the usual college tuition, entered the militia, and soon became an army officer. His natural tastes, however, were for art and politics. Accordingly, when sent minister to Rome, at a subsequent period, we find him assiduously cultivating the fine arts; and in a short time he became a skilful landscape painter. Here his latent and instinctive taste and capabilities genially unfolded; the impressive ruins, the treasures of the Vatican, and the companionship of artists, continually informed and inspired his mind, which

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rapidly and gracefully developed in an atmosphere so accordant with its original bias. We frequently have occasion to remark the affinity between the arts of design and certain departments of literature; and seldom can this relation be traced with more charming effect than in the writings of D' Azeglio. The clearness of design, the felicitous adaptation of the atmosphere to the outline, the grouping, scenic descriptions, and fidelity to those laws of historical perspective, which are so analogous to the same principles in painting,—all unfold themselves to the critical reader of his masterly narratives. We feel, as we read, that the best preparation for that species of literary art is the discipline of the accomplished draughtsman; for an historical romance, in its true signaificance, is like an elaborate picture, subject to the same conditions of light and shade, truth to fact and nature, and harmonious conception.

Azeglio delineates in language with a patient attention to details, a wise regulation of colour, and a constant eye to unity of effect, which we at once refer to his studies in the Roman Academy and galleries, and his familiarity with the pencil and palette. It was not, however, until the maturity of his powers that his genius found scope in language: before he had acquired fame as a novelist, the intrinsic qualities of the man won him an exalted place in the estimation of a circle of friends, including the most illustrious names of Lombardy. On his removal to Milan, in 1830, his urbanity of spirit, fluent expression, man-

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liness, and evident intellectual ability, had thus gained him numerous admirers; and Rossi and Manzoni were among his most intimate and attached companions. It is an interesting coincidence, that the destined successor of the first of Italian novelists became his son-in-law. D' Azeglio espoused the daughter of Manzoni; and somewhat of the domestic pathos which gives a melancholy charm to his principal work is doubtless the reflection of his own sad experience, for but a single year of conjugal happiness followed his marriage, his bride having died soon after giving birth to a daughter, who has since found a true mother in Luigia Blondell, the present wife of D' Azeglio.

The social character of Milan is rather literary than artistic; and it seems a natural inference, that, when the embryo statesman and clever landscape painter exchanged the Eternal City for the Lombard capital, and found himself in the centre of a distinguished group of patriotic men of letters, the chief of whom was bound to him by ties of family as well as sympathy of taste, he should catch the spirit of authorship, and seek to embody in that form the knowledge acquired in another field, and the aspirations that craved more emphatic utterance than could be expressed by the silent canvas. In 1833, therefore, appeared "Ettore Fieramosca, or the Challenge of Barletta," the best Italian historical romance since the "Promessi Sposi." Its easy and copious style, its truth of description and distinct

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characterization, the simplicity of its plot, and, above all, the thoroughly Italian nature of the argument, instantly established its popularity. The incident upon which the story is founded is as familiar to the historical reader as it is memorable in the annals of Italy;—that of a drawn battle between thirteen Italian and the same number of French knights, occasioned by the challenge of the former, for an imputation cast upon their national bravery by one of the latter. Sanctioned as was the encounter by the leaders of both armies, witnessed by a large concourse, including citizens and soldiers of France, Spain, and Italy,—the ferocious zeal of the combatants, the duration of the struggle, the patriotic as well as individual sense of honour involved, and, finally, the signal triumph of the Italian arms, combine to render the scene one of intense interest.

Azeglio availed himself of this episode in the early wars of his country, to revive that sentiment of national unity which so many years of dispersion and tyranny had obscured, but not extinguished, in the Italian heart. From the records of the past he thus evoked the spirit so requisite to consecrate the present. Ettore Fieramosca is the ideal of an Italian knight; his unfortunate but nobly cherished love, his prowess, beauty, and fiery enthusiasm for his country, his chivalric accomplishments and entire self-devotion, beautiful and attractive as they are, become more impressive from the strict historical fidelity with

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which they are associated. The games, laws, costume, turns of thought and speech, and military and popular habits of the era, are scrupulously given. Among the characters introduced are Cesar Borgia and Vittoria Colonna, names that eloquently typify the two extremes of Italian character,—the integrity of which, in its villany and its virtue, is admirably preserved; the ecclesiastic, the innkeeper, the man-at-arms, the gossiping citizen, and the prince of that day, are portrayed to the life. Many of the local scenes described have the clearness of outline and the vividness of tint which make them permanent reminiscences to the contemplative reader, and have associated them in the minds of his countrymen with the hero of D' Azeglio's romance and the sentiment of national honour.

In 1841 appeared "The Maid of Florence," the work which established D' Azeglio's fame as a literary artist and a man of decided genius. The same patriotic instinct guided his pen as in his previous enterprise; but the design was more elaborate and finished, and the conception wrought out through more extensive research and a higher degree of feeling. The time chosen is that terrible epoch when Florence defended herself alone against the arms of Clement the Seventh and Charles the Fifth. In his account of the siege of 1529-30, he follows Varchi in regard to the prominent external facts; but into the partial and imperfect record of the

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historian he breathed the life of nature and tradition. For this purpose, the documents of the age were assiduously collated; the monuments, walls, and towers of Florence interrogated; the bastions of Saint Miniato, the palaces of the Medici and Puzzi, the Bargello, the piazza, ancient private dwellings — the courts and staircases, the portraits and legends — every tradition and memorial of the period, examined, to acquire the requisite scenic and local material, which are wrought up with such authentic minuteness as to form a complete picture, and one which the observation of every visitor to the Tuscan capital at once and entirely recognizes.

Nor has he bestowed less care upon the spirit and action of his romance. The people, as they once existed, in all their original efficiency and individual character, are reproduced, as they then lived, thought, suffered, and battled, after three hundred years of internal agitation and wars, proving themselves adequate to cope at once with both Emperor and Pope, and falling at last rather through treachery than conquest. The very atmosphere of those times seems to float around us as we read. The republic lives in its original vigour. We realize the events of history reanimated by the fire of poetic invention. Niccolò is the ideal of an Italian patriot, as Fieramosca is of a knight. There is a Lear-like solemnity in his vehement passion and religious self-control, a Marino Faliero dignity in his political ruin. The consistent earnestness of his

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character, the wisdom and majesty, the fierce indignation and holy resignation, the high counsels and serene martyrdom, of the venerable patriot, are at once exalted and touching. Depressed by existing degeneracy, Azeglio seems to have evoked this noble example from the past to revive the dormant hopes and elevate the national sentiment of his countrymen. Around this grand central figure he has grouped, with rare skill and marvellous effect, a number of historical personages and domestic characters, whose words, acts, and appearance give a distinct reality and dramatic effect to the whole conception. It is enough to mention Savonarola, Feruccio, and Malatesta—the reformer, the soldier, and the civic ruler—all reproduced with accuracy, and their agency upon the spirit of the age and the course of events suggested with consummate tact.

From the intensely exciting scenes enacted in the camp, around the walls of the besieged city, on the bastions, in the cabinet at Volterra, we are suddenly transported to the home of Lapi, and witness the domestic life of the age. The family portraits are exquisitely discriminated; Lisa and Laodamia are two of those finely contrasted and beautifully conceived female characters which, like Scott's Minna and Brenda, leave a Shakspearian identity of impression on the reader's mind. Lamberto is a fine type of the youth of Tuscany; Troilo, of Italian duplicity; and Bindo, of a younger son, beloved

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and brave; while the struggle between monastic and martial impulses, so characteristic of the epoch, is vividly depicted in Fanfulla. Selvaggia is, also, a representative, both in her wild career and her genuine penitence, of a species native to the soil.

As Ruskin studied the architecture of Venice to fix dates and analyze combinations, D' Azeglio appears to have scrutinized the art, literature, and monuments of Florence, to gather the varied and legitimate elements which compose this work. He catches the voice of faction, and prolongs its echo; he paints the edifice until it stands visibly before the imagination or the memory; he reveals the mood of the patriot and the lover, so that we share its deep emotion; and leads us, as it were, through the streets of the besieged city, to the bedside of the tender maiden and the vigil of the anxious citizen, till the objects and spirit of the age and people become, through sympathy and observation, like conscious realities. Among the incidental merits of this work may also be reckoned its philosophic insight, exhibited not only in a fine study of the laws of character, but in the influence of political opinion upon domestic life, the conflict between patriotic and personal sentiment, the local agency of institutions, and the mutual relation of military and religious enthusiasm. Nor can we fail to perceive, throughout, the singular advantages enjoyed by the historical novelist in Italy, finding in her works of art, her temples, palaces, and

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libraries the most significant and, at the same time, authentic hints and glimpses of the life of the past. Many exquisite touches of picturesque or suggestive limning, such as mark the patient explorer and the observant artist, occur in "The Maid of Florence; or Niccolò de' Lapi." But if to these characteristics the work owes much of its immediate popularity, and not a little of its intrinsic interest, the standard literary value attached to it is, in no small degree, derived from the style. The language of D' Azeglio is terse, flowing, and appropriate. He writes in a calm, though fervent spirit; his tone is chastened and intense; and he uses words with a keen sense of their meaning and delicate adaptation. He has drawn a picture of the age, not only alive with moral sentiment and warmed by patriotic emotion, but so managed as to excite profound respect, as well as earnest sympathy—to blend in harmonious contrast the office of historian and poet.

Indeed, D' Azeglio's great distinction is a certain moderation, judgment, and rational view of the prospects and needs of his country, rarely found in unison with so much zeal and genius. He early manifested this trait in habits of study and investigation, and has since, and always, been true to himself in this regard, as a man of action. It is on account of his excellent sense, logical power, and reverence for truth, that he has so eminently succeeded both as an artist and a statesman. No better proof of his superiority

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to the mass of revolutionists can be desired, than the sentiments and arguments of his well-known political essay induced by the occurrences in Romagna in the autumn of 1845. He there states, without the least fanaticism or exaggeration, the real state of the case, and points out clearly and justly the reforms necessary in the Pontifical States. He rebukes all premature and ill-considered measures on the part of the oppressed people, as only calculated to postpone their enfranchisement and prejudice their cause; he wisely advocates gradual enlightenment, and eloquently describes the fatal consequences of rash and ignorant movements.

He gives a plain and authentic statement of facts to show the utter impolicy, as well as inhumanity, of secret prosecutions, of resort to foreign arms, base espionage, a contraband system, censorship, and an inconsistent and unreliable code, and all the other flagrant evils of Papal sway; and while thus effectively reproaching the government, he is equally indignant and impartial in his condemnation of reckless agitators and precipitate heroes, who not only vainly sacrifice themselves, but bring into fatal disrepute more judicious patriots. Azeglio comprehends the inevitable agency of public sentiment as a means of national redemption; he understands the Italian character, and points out the difference between animal and civic courage; he thinks fools as dangerous as knaves to the cause of freedom; shows

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the need of political education, pleads for a due regard to time, opportunity, and means in order to secure permanent advantage, and declares that the great lesson his countrymen have to learn is to avoid the two extremes of reckless despair and inert resignation, to improve, to hope, to prepare the way, and thus gain moral vigour, the world's respect, and God's favour; and, while he demonstrates the injustice of the Papal government, he would not have its victims imitate the madman, who, in flying from an insect, ran over a precipice.

He gives instances, on the one hand, of the decadence of the towns of Romagna in consequence of misrule, and, on the other, of the concessions of despotic governments to the consistent and enlightened appeal of their subjects. In his strict justice, he even praises Austria for her administration of law, compared with the Roman tyranny, that makes the judge and accuser one; and selects from his own state an example of treachery with which to contrast the self-devotion of those who fought at Barletta. This able pamphlet, entitled "Ultimi Casi di Romagna," is one of the most candid and thoughtful expositions of actual political evils, and the only available means of overcoming them, which a native writer has produced. No one can read it without sympathy for the oppressed, indignation against the government, and respect for the reasoning of Azeglio. It is not less intelligible than philosophic; and subsequent events have amply proved the sound-

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ness of its arguments and the correctness of its inferences.

If, in view of the many abortive revolutions, the want of unity, the influence of Jesuitism the interference of France and Austria, and all the other antagonistic conditions that environ the intelligent votaries of Italian independence and nationality, we seek a clew by which to thread the dark labyrinth of her misfortunes, and find a way into the light of freedom and progress, what rational plan or ground of hope suggests itself? Only, as it seems to us, the practical adoption in some section of the land of those political and social reforms which, once realized, will inevitably spread; the successful experiment in a limited sphere, which, by the force of example and moral laws, will gradually extend. Let the capacity for self-government, the advantages of liberal institutions, be demonstrated in one state, and they cannot fail to penetrate the whole nation. A few years since, Rome seemed the destined nucleus for such a change, and subsequently Tuscany; but the bigotry of ecclesiastical power in the one, and the grasp of Austrian power in the other, soon led to a fatal reaction. The course of events and the facts of to-day now indisputably designate Sardinia as the region whence the light is to emanate. Favoured, as we have seen, by the character of her people, her local position, and the traits of her past history, the very disaster that checked her army has tended to concentrate and

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develop the spirit of the age and the elements of constitutional liberty within her borders. The loss of the battle of Novara and the abdication of Charles Albert, though apparently great misfortunes, have resulted in signal benefits. After securing peace from their adversaries chiefly by a pecuniary sacrifice, the king and citizens of Piedmont turned their energies towards internal reform with a wisdom and good faith which are rapidly yielding legitimate fruit.

Public schools were instituted, the press made free, the Waldenses allowed to quit their valleys, build churches, and elect representatives, the privileges of the clergy abolished, and the two bishops who ventured to oppose the authority of her state tried, condemned, and banished, the Pope's interference repudiated, the right of suffrage instituted, railroads from Turin to Genoa and from Alessandria to Lago Maggiore constructed, the electric telegraph introduced, liberal commercial treaties formed, docks built, and cheap postal laws enacted. In a word, the great evils that have so long weighed down the people of the Italian peninsula—unlimited monarchical power, aristocratic and clerical immunities derived from the Middle Ages, the censorship of the press, the espionage of the police, and intolerance of all but the Catholic religion—no longer exist in Sardinia. Regarding the constitution of Charles Albert as a sacred legacy, his son and people resolved to uphold and carry out its principles; and they have done so, with scarcely any violence or

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civil discord. Accordingly, an example is now before the Italians, and within their observation and sympathy, of a free, progressive, and enlightened government; and this one fact is pregnant with hope for the entire nation. Only fanatics and shallow adventurers behold the signs of promise without grateful emotion. The wise and true friends of Italy, at home and abroad, welcome the daily proofs of a new era for that unhappy land afforded by the prosperity and freedom now enjoyed in Piedmont.*

It would be manifestly unjust to ascribe all these propitious changes to the personal influence of D'Azeglio; but he deserves the credit of projecting and successfully advocating many of the most effective ameliorations, and of being the consistent and recognized expositor of the liberal policy of the state. The accession of Pius IX. was greeted by him with all the delight the hopeful dawn of his career naturally inspired among the Italian patriots. He published a letter full of applause and encouragement, and had a long and satisfactory interview with the new Pope; and when the bitter disappointment ensued, he carried out, in his official capacity, the sentiments he professed, and to which Pius IX. was shamelessly recreant. Like Henry Martyn in England, he proposed the emancipation of the Jews in Piedmont, and his philanthropy is manifested

* We are gratified to perceive that one of the few Italian journals published in the United States, the *Eco d' Italia* of New York, fully records and ably sustains the noble example of the Sardinian government.

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in the establishment of public baths and fires for the poor. He took a bold and decided stand against the Pope, and originated the treaty with England. In his address to the Sardinian parliament, on the 12th of February 1852, he expresses the noblest sentiments and principles, in language of simple and earnest vigour;—repudiating what are called reasons of state, maintaining that the same morality is applicable to governments and individuals, that integrity has taken the place of astuteness, that good sense and good faith are all that the true statesman requires to guide him, and that the press and facility of intercourse which enable Turin, Moscow, and Edinburgh to feel simultaneously the force of public opinion, have emancipated rulers from the narrow resource of subtlety, and induced among all enlightened governments reliance on the absolute power of truth and fidelity. He attributes, in this masterly discourse, the peaceful achievement of so much permanent good in the state, to the virtue of the people, the prudence of the legislature, and the loyalty of the king.

How long Sardinia will be permitted to carry on within her own limits the progressive system that now so happily distinguishes her from the other continental governments, is extremely doubtful. The asylum she gives to political refugees, the unpleasant truths her free press announces, and the operation of her free-trade principles, occasion the greatest annoyance to Austria, and excite the sympathetic desires of less-

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favoured states. It is scarcely to be hoped that interference of a more active kind than has yet taken place will be attempted. Meantime, however, it is but just to recognize the noble example she has set of enlightened self-government, and to award the highest praise to the generous and judicious statesman at the head of her policy. It will prove a remarkable coincidence if the enterprise recently broached in New York, of a line of steamers between that city and Genoa, is realized; thus uniting by frequent intercourse the commercial emporium of the New World with the birthplace of her discoverer, and opening a direct and permanent communication between the greatest republic of the earth and the one state of Italy which has proved herself sufficiently intelligent, moral, and heroic, to reform peacefully an oppressive heritage of political and social evils.

The efficacy of D'Azeglio's patriotic zeal is, as we have endeavoured to show, derived from his knowledge and judgment. Years of exile have not caused him to lose sight of the actual exigencies of the country. Having lived alternately at Turin, Florence, Genoa, Milan, Lucca, and Rome, and visited all parts of the peninsula, he is quite familiar with the condition of the people of the respective states, the special local evils of each administration, and the available resources of the nation. Thoroughly versed in the art, literature, and history of Italy, enjoying the intimacy and confidence of her leading spirits, and practically acquainted with diplomatic life, his views are not

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random speculations, but well-considered opinions, his aims distinct and progressive, and the spirit in which he works that of a philosopher. The beautiful emanations of his study and genius have awakened, far and wide, the pride and affection of his countrymen. In 1845 he commenced, in the "Antologia Italiana," a new romance, founded on the Lombard league, which the cessation of that journal and the claims of official life have obliged him to suspend. In 1848 he fought in Lombardy; and early in the succeeding year an unostentatious but select and cordial banquet was given him in Rome by his admirers and friends, to congratulate one another on the new hopes of Italian regeneration which events then justified.

Through all the chances and changes of the times, the noble author and statesman has serenely maintained his faith and wisely dedicated his mind to his country, emphatically giving utterance to truth and reason, both to fanatical patriots and despotic rulers;—to the one demonstrating the inutility of spasmodic efforts, of guerillas, of inadequate resistance and inopportune action; and to the other calmly proving the absolute folly, as well as wickedness, of a total disregard of the spirit of the age and the claims of humanity. The present condition and prospects of his native state now justify his arguments and realize his dearest hopes; and it is her peculiar glory to have at the head of her administration, not only a liberal and wise statesman, but one of the most gifted and patriotic of her sons.

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THE ORNITHOLOGIST:

AUDUBON.

A PECULIAR charm invests the lives of naturalists. The path of the military conqueror is blood-stained, that of the statesman involved and tortuous, while the pale legions of avarice usually beset the goal of maritime discovery, and associate the names of its heroes with scenes of anarchy and oppression; but the lover of Nature, who goes forth to examine her wonders or copy her graces, is impelled by a noble enthusiasm, and works in the spirit both of love and wisdom. I cannot read of the brave wanderings of Michaux in search of his sylvan idols; of Hugh Miller, while at his mason's work, reverently deducing the grandest theories of creation from a fossil of the "old red sandstone;" or of Wilson, made an ornithologist, in feeling at least, by the sight of a red-headed woodpecker which greeted his eyes on landing in America; without a warm sympathy with the simple, pure, and earnest natures of men thus drawn into a life-devotion to

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Nature, by admiration of her laws and sensibility to her beauty. If I thoughtfully follow the steps and analyze the characters of such men, I usually find them a most attractive combination of the child, the hero, and the poet—with, too often, a shade of the martyr. An inkling of the naturalist is indeed characteristic of poets. Cowper loved hares; Gray, gold-fish; Alfieri, horses; and Sir Walter Scott, dogs; but, when pursued as a special vocation, ornithology seems the most interesting department of natural history.

Birds constitute the poetry of the animal creation: they seem, like flowers, the gratuitous offspring of Nature; and although their utility, as the destroyers of baneful insects, is well known, I habitually associate them with the sense of beauty. Indeed, familiarity alone blinds us to the suggestive charm attached to winged creatures; and I can scarcely imagine the hopelessness which would brood over woods and fields, if deprived of the tuneful voices and graceful movements of the feathered tribe. The gift of aërial locomotion they enjoy is a distinction which robes them with an attractive mystery, and leads me to regard them as creatures of less restrained volition than any other species. Freedom of action is thus one of their less obvious charms, but one to which I instinctively refer a certain exemption from ordinary trials, and capacity of high pleasures: the chartered libertines of the air, ranging its vast expanse as inclination

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or necessity dictates, they seem to belong to a more highly endowed order of animal life, and to spiritualize the principle of motion by grace, alacrity, and a power to counteract natural forces. The flight of a bird, attentively watched, is one of the most inspiring revelations of Nature. The ease, rapidity, and grace with which it ranges the "upper deep," and the apparent caprice or unerring instinct which regulates its course, appeal at once to science and poetry, and the minstrel as well as the naturalist is warmed into observant admiration. Delicacy of organization and exquisite plumage add to the interest thus excited, and when I combine with these attractions that of a versatile musical endowment, it is not surprising that birds have created such enthusiasm in the explorers of Nature, and such affection in the untaught but susceptible. Animal spirits seem embodied in the swift, volatile, and gay tribe; and while they approach human nature in this regard, its holier sympathies are illustrated by the domestic habits, the attachments, and individuality of birds; and thus they become naturally linked with the most grateful associations of human life: so that in conversation, literature, and art, they occupy as distinctive and significant a relation as we award to any other order of creatures.

To the natural theologian there are few illustrations more pleasing and available than those derived from the structure of birds: its adaptation to their habits yields the most useful hints towards the invention of

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a flying machine: the perforated membrane which encloses the lungs, through which air passes into the cavities of the breast, abdomen, and even into the hollows of the bones; the powerful muscles of the wings, the lightness and delicacy of the plumage (increasing their buoyancy while protecting them from the weather), the cleaving shape of the head and bill, and the rudder tail, mark them for inhabitants of the air, of which they consume a larger proportion in the ratio of their size than any other creatures. The magnitude of the brain, too, is proportionally greater; and the complexity and perfection of their vocal organs is a problem for science; while instinct asserts itself in their migratory and domestic habits, in a manner so remarkable, that the history of birds has furnished more inspiration to story-tellers and poets than all the rest of the animal creation. In special adaptation the various modifications of beak and talons are wonderful: how different a feeding-apparatus for instance, belongs to the woodpecker and the California fruit-eater! In the perfection of the senses, also, birds excel and share the pleasures of sight and sound with man, indicating their enjoyment with an almost human expression. The minute and exquisite beauties of insects, visible to us only through the microscope, have given rise to the belief that the richest provision exists for the gratification of their sight; and it may as justly be inferred that birds are alive to the intricacies and refinements of sound to a

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degree which I cannot realize. The act of singing, and the innumerable cadences and versatility of note they exhibit, suggest that the world of sound has for them an infinite range of significance. In variety of aptitude and vocation they also assimilate with the human species, some being as it were minstrels by profession, and others architects or hunters; and not until I enter into the labours of the ornithologist, can I imagine what numerous and modified species exist of birds of prey and of passage—the climbers, the gallinaceous, the waders, and the web-footed. The wonderful process of *ovation* is yet another natural mystery revealed by birds, and Audubon used to speak of the rapture with which, when a boy, he hung over the newly-discovered nest, and looked upon the little shining eggs, so carefully and snugly disposed. Independent of the sense and beauty and the kindliness of feeling to which birds minister, they seem to embody and express pleasure more directly than any other offspring of Nature. Her benign influence is singularly associated with them; the spontaneous and, as it were, vital joy which seems to animate their song and motions, brings the idea of enjoyment vividly to the heart—they seem to prophecy and proclaim happiness; and, accordingly, the misanthropes repudiate, while the cheerful welcome them. It would require a degree of introspective attention rarely exercised, to realize how much the familiar notes of bird acts upon our moods. In the balmy stillness of a summer noon, the vernal

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air of a spring morning, or amid the gorgeous drapery of an autumn wood, the chirp, carol, or cry of birds breaks upon my solitude with an impression or a winsome effect, kindling to the imagination and eloquent to the heart. "Lord!" exclaims old Walton, "what music hast thou provided for thy saints in heaven, when thou affordest bad men such music on earth?" There appears to be a meaning in the sound beyond what reaches the ear; it links itself with the aspects of nature, with the spirit of the hour, or blends with the sad reminiscence or the hopeful reverie, like its echo or response:—

> "While mellow warble, sprightly trill
> The tremulous heart excite,
> And turns the balmy air to still
> The balancer's delight."

There is, too, a metaphysical reason for the superior interest which birds excite: they have great variety and individuality of character, and we instinctively apply their names to our acquaintances as the best and most available synonyms. Who has not encountered human beings selfish as the cormorant, loquacious and unoriginal as the parrot, vain as the peacock, gentle as the dove, chattering as the jay, volatile as the swallow, solemn as the owl, rapacious as the hawk, noble as the eagle, and so on through all the modifications of character? There are, indeed, two human attributes which birds possess in a striking degree—affection and vanity. There is a bird in Mexico with a most

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beautiful tail, which builds its nest with two openings, in order to go in and out without ruffling its feathers. Their brilliant and varied costume has suggested fabrics and patterns innumerable to more rational beings; and many of them, apparently, take as conscious delight in their array, and the display of it, and their vocal accomplishments, to win admiration or sympathy, as the most accomplished coquette or gallant. In fact, although they seek prey and build nests, their ways are quite social, and they seem born to leisure, like people of fortune; and it is this apparent immunity from care, this life of vagrant enjoyment (as if mere flying about and singing were their destiny), which renders birds, like flowers, so grateful to the mind and senses. The blue jay is a practical joker; the snow-bunting delights in a storm, and the white owl in moonlight, quite as much as any poet; the tailor-bird sews leaves together to make itself a nest with the skill of a *modiste;* the cuckoo is an adept in small imposture—the Yankee-pedlar of birds; the maternal instinct of the quail induces her to pretend lameness, and lead off urchins in search of her nest on a false track. There is an Indian bird of luxurious tastes, whose domicile is divided into several compartments, each of which it lights up at night with fireflies. I cannot see the kingfisher intently gazing down upon the waters from a lofty tree, without realizing the wonderful visual adaptation of its optics. It is attested by many travellers, that when a mule falls

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dead on the plains of South America, although not a bird is visible to the human eye, in a few moments flocks of vultures appear, having either scented or seen their prey from so vast a distance as to indicate an incalculable power of the visual or olfactory nerves. I cannot see a flight of crows without thinking of the ancient time, when their course was so anxiously watched by the augurs; nor can I hear the first welcome-note of the robin, as he hops about the field before my dwelling, as if on a congratulatory visit at the advent of spring, without having the associations of childhood revived with the thought of that memorable English ballad which consecrates this bird to youthful affections.

Of the rude sculptured figures on Egyptian tombs, the most correctly designed are those of birds; and in that land of sunshine and mystery, the ibis was held sacred: while as effective accessories to the grand and monotonous landscape, most appropriately stands a solitary heron, apparently carved in bold relief against the twilight sky; or, floating high above the traveller's head, is seen a symmetrical phalanx of flamingoes, their black wings and snowy bodies gracefully parting the ambient firmament. The hue of a Java sparrow's beak is inexpressibly cheery; the habit of the ostrich of burying her eggs in the sand, and leaving them to be hatched by the sun, and the fidelity of the carrier-pigeon, are facts in natural history prolific of comparisons. The antique design of the doves at a fountain

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is constantly repeated by mosaic and cameo workers; and on sword, banner, and signet, the king of birds remains the universal emblem of freedom and power, equally significant of American liberty and Roman dominion.

One of the most celebrated jurists in America was missed at dinner by his family, one day in the country; and, after diligent search, was found in the hayloft, absorbed in watching a pair of swallows, and acknowledged that, accustomed as he was to technical and abstract investigations, the observation of animated nature proved a refreshment which he could not have imagined. Few of us, indeed, can fail to have acquired a personal interest in birds, however we may have neglected their biography. A family with which we were domesticated abroad, had a pair of turtle-doves in the house, who flew at pleasure about, and exhibited no fear, except in the presence of strangers; one of them died, and we were surprised at witnessing no indications of the despairing grief ascribed to this bird when thus bereft. The anomaly was explained, however, when we noticed what an attachment the dove manifested towards a beautiful boy of six years; her favourite resting-place was in the profuse golden hair of the child; here she would sit brooding, while the boy was at his sports or his book, swaying to and fro with his movements, or quietly nestling when he assumed a fixed position. Sometimes, when the sunshine fell upon the pair, in a picturesque attitude,

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the idea of a Cupid with one of his mother's doves, or of an infant St. John with this living emblem of beatitude, irresistibly suggested itself. The child was seized with a brain fever, and, after a brief illness, died; and then the dove's plaintive cooing was incessant. She refused sustenance for a long time, and adopted a monastic life, in the high and dark folds of a window-curtain—abjuring her previous habits of sociability, and apparently consecrating her life to sorrow. Who has watched the yellow birds swinging on the lithe sprays of an elm in a New England village, the flight of blackbirds in the autumn round the shores of Lake Champlain, or the graceful sweep of the curlews on the Atlantic coast, and not thenceforth found them indissolubly associated with these localities? As I crossed the piazza of St. Mark, at Venice, for the first time, I noticed with surprise that the pigeons did not fly at my approach, and recalled the fact that they had been sacredly protected by the ancient government, and enjoyed prescriptive rights, which they obviously considered inviolable. It is a striking thought, when I contemplate it, that the eider-down which pillows the head of beauty, or trembles at the breath of her whose fair bosom it covers, was torn from the wild sea-bird; that the graceful plume which waves over the warrior's crest once sustained the poised eagle among the clouds, or winged the ostrich on his desert path. With how many evening reveries and reminiscences of sentiment is the

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note of the whip-poor-will associated, and what an appropriate sound for the desolate marsh is the cry of the bittern! It is not surprising that tradition and poetry embalm the names of so many birds; from the superstition of the ignorant mariner to the appreciative love of the educated bard, they, though so often sacrificed, are yet endeared to man. The fables of the roe and the phœnix are among their most remote memorials; mythology has wedded them to her deities; on tavern-signs they betoken good cheer, and on banners are national emblems. Burns utters a natural human sentiment when he asks, in the song, the litle birds o' bonnie Doon, how they can chant, and he sae fu o' care! One of the most exquisite metaphors in English poetry is that of Goldsmith, when he compares the good pastor's efforts to lure his charge to the skies to those of a bird tempting its offspring to fly; and next to it is that of Byron, in allusion to Kirk White's early death, comparing him to the dying eagle who sees that his own feather winged the fatal shaft. And another more tender and graphic image still is that of Dante in the episode of Francesca de Rimini:—

> "Quali colombe, dal disio chiamate,
> Con l'ali aperte e ferme al dolce nido
> Volan per l'aer dal voler portate:
> Cotal useir della schiera ov'e Dido,
> A noi venendo per l'aer maligno,
> Si forte fu l'affettuoso grido."

Boccaccio's falcon and Sterne's starling, and the raven

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in Barnaby Rudge, are classic birds, since rendered by genius the expositors of noble and humorous sentiment. But in this, as in all other departments of nature, the most characteristic and feeling tributes emanate from the poets.

The graceful flight and instinct of the waterfowl—the very sentiment of the bird, and the impression it makes upon a contemplative mind, have been embodied by Bryant: the very rhythm of that favourite poem seems to coincide with its lonely and sustained motion when sweeping in majestic curves the gray twilight of an autumn day. The superstition attached to birds has been used with consummate art in two poems, the popularity of which indicates how successfully the natural and supernatural may be wrought and blended in verse; we need scarcely allude to Coleridge's Ancient Mariner and Poe's Raven.

The metre, images, and very diction of Shelley's ode to a skylark echo the aspiring, joyous flight and melody of that favourite bird of the poets. Hans Andersen's juvenile story of the "Ugly Duck" touches felicitously a comic vein, which observers are well aware may be amply suggested in this field; witness the graphic humour of Irving's description of a rookery and a barnyard fowl on a rainy day, in "The Stout Gentleman." For the peculiar sentiment which imaginative minds elicit from the song or appearance of birds, and the associations they awaken, we may refer to Milton's beautiful allusion to the nightingale, who "all night

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long her amorous descant sang," and the fine ode to the same melodious bird by Keats; to Wordsworth's ballad of "Poor Susan," Dana's "Beach bird," and Sprague's "Swallows that flew in at the Church Window." These instances of poems suggested by "wanderers of the upper deep," are not, perhaps, so illustrative of the peculiar influence they exert upon human sympathies, as the casual allusions and incidental metaphors which continually present themselves in the standard poets. As ornithology is more generally studied, and the peculiar habits of these "aerial companions" of Audubon become more familiar, poetry will more definitely consecrate the subject; others of the species, besides the self-sacrificing pelican and the harmonious bulbul, will figure in story; and the bards will follow the sagacious example of an American poet,* and by exact observation, render the characteristic advents of birds a means of effectively describing nature, as thus, in spring:—

"Then bursts the song from every leafy glade,
The yielding season's bridal serenade;
Then flush the wing, returning summer calls
Through the deep arches of her forest halls;
The bluebird breathing from his azure plumes
The fragrance borrow'd where the myrtle blooms;
The thrush, poor wanderer, dropping meekly down,
Clad in his remnant of autumnal brown;
The oriole drifting like a flake of fire,
Rent by the whirlwind from a blazing spire;

* Holmes.

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> The robin jerking his spasmodic throat,
> Repeats staccato his peremptory note ;
> The crack-brain'd bobolink courts his crazy mate,
> Poised on a bulwark tipsy with his weight;
> Merry in his cage the lone canary sings,
> Feels the soft air and spreads his idle wings."

Audubon's career as an ornithologist began and was prosecuted with an artistic rather than a scientific enthusiasm. His father appears to have been an intelligent lover of nature, and took pleasure in walking abroad with his son to observe her wonders. These colloquies and promenades made a lasting impression upon his plastic mind: it is evident that the habits and appearance of animated nature at once enlisted his sympathies; the accidental view of a book of illustrations in natural history excited the desire of imitation, and he began in a rude way to delineate the forms, colours, attitudes, and, as far as possible, the expression of the creatures he so admired. Chagrined, but never wholly discouraged, at the ill-success of his early attempts, he annually executed and destroyed hundreds of pictures and drawings, until long practice had given him the extraordinary skill which renders his mature efforts unequalled, both for authenticity and beauty. He artlessly confesses that finding it impossible to possess or to live with the birds and animals which inspired his youthful love, he became ardently desirous to make perfect representations of them, and in this feeling we trace the germ of his subsequent greatness. Thus the origin of Audubon's

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world-renowned achievements was disinterested. His love of nature was not philosophic, like that of Wordsworth; nor scientific, like that of Humboldt; nor adventurous, like that of Boone; but special and artistic,—circumstances rather than native idiosyncrasy made him a naturalist; and his knowledge was by no means so extensive in this regard as that of others less known to fame: but few men have indulged so genuine a love of nature for her own sake, and found such enjoyment in delineating one of the most poetical and least explored departments of her boundless kingdom. To the last his special ability, as an artistic naturalist, was unapproached; and while one of his sons drew the outline, and another painted the landscape or the foreground, it was his faithful hand that, with a steel pen, made the hairy coat of the deer, or, with a fine pencil, added the exquisite plumage to the sea-fowl's breast. For years he fondly explored woods, prairies, and the Atlantic shores, and drew and coloured birds and beasts, without an idea of any benefit other than the immediate gratification thus derived. It was not until his interview with Lucien Bonaparte in 1824, and the latter's unexpected offer to purchase his drawings, that he conceived the project of giving the results of his explorations to the world. Although, in pursuance of this intention, he embarked soon after for Europe with characteristic promptitude and eager hopes, the loneliness of his position and the want of means and influence depressed him on landing; but the instant

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and cordial recognition he met with from the active literary and scientific men abroad, soon confirmed his original resolution. Roscoe, Wilson, Jeffrey, Brewster, Herschel, and Humboldt successfully advocated his claims, and cheered him with their personal friendship; and, under such favourable auspices, his first contributions to ornithology appeared in Edinburgh. Indeed, notwithstanding the privations and difficulties he encountered, an unusual amount of sympathy and encouragement fell to the lot of Audubon. Compared with other votaries of a special object purely tasteful and scientific in its nature, he had little reason to complain. Of the one hundred and seventy subscribers of a thousand dollars each to his great work, eighty were his own countrymen; and his declining years were passed in independence and comfort in the midst of an affectionate and thriving family—the participants of his taste. His elasticity of temperament also was not less a distinction than a blessing; it supported his wearisome and lonely wanderings both in search of birds in the forest and in search of encouragement among men; and when the labour of years was destroyed, after a brief interval of mental anguish, it nerved him to renewed labour, so that in three years his portfolio was again filled.

Born the same year that independence was declared by the Americans, his father an admiral in the French navy, and his birthplace Louisiana, he was early sent to France for his education, where he received lessons

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in drawing from David, but pined the while for the free life and the wild forests of his country. On his return, his father gave him a beautiful plantation on the banks of the Schuylkill, and he married; but neither agricultural interests nor domestic ties could quell the love of nature in his breast; and for months he wandered in search of objects for his pencil, unsustained by any human being except his wife, who seems to have realized from the first the tendency and promise of his mind. At length, in order to enjoy the opportunities he craved, and at the same time have the society of his family, Audubon determined to emigrate, and selected the village of Henderson, in Kentucky, for his new home. In the autumn of 1810 he floated down the Ohio, in an open skiff, with his wife, child, and two negroes, his mattress, viands, and rifle, happy in the prospect of nearer and more undisturbed intercourse with nature, and intensely enjoying the pomp of the autumnal woods, the haze of the Indian summer, and the wildness and solitude around him. The locality chosen proved adequate to his aims; day after day, with his dog, gun, and box of pencils and colours, he made excursions, now shooting down a fresh subject, now delineating its hues and form; one moment peering into a nest, and at another scaling a cliff, for hours watching the conduct of a pair of birds as, unconscious that their doings were to be set in a note-book, they constructed a graceful nest, fed their young, or trilled a spontaneous melody; over streams,

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through tangled brushwood, amid swamps and in stony ravines, beneath tempest, sunshine, and starlight—the indefatigable wanderer thus lived; the wild beast, the treacherous Indian, the gentle moon, and the lowly wild flower sole witnesses of his curious labours.

Audubon returned from Europe to prosecute his ornithological researches with fresh zest and assiduity; and his first expedition was to the coast of Florida, where he made rich additions to his portfolio among the seafowl of that region. He afterwards successfully explored Maine, the British Provinces, and the ice-clad and desolate shores of Labrador. The most remarkable and happiest era of his life was, doubtless, that employed in collecting the materials, executing the pictures, and obtaining the subscribers to his "Birds of America." His wanderings previously have the interest of adventure, and the charm derived from the indulgence of a passionate love of nature; and his subsequent excursions and artistic labours, in behalf of the work on the "Quadrupeds of America," began in 1842, afford pleasing evidence of his loutissent taste and noble perseverance. But the period included by his ornithological enterprise is more characteristic and satisfactory. He had a great end in view, and the wildest forest and most unfrequented shores, the highest and most cultured sphere of society, and the most patient and delicate limning, were the means of its realization; and it is when contemplating him in this threefold relation that we learn to appreciate the mingled hardi-

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hood, enthusiasm, firmness, and dignity so remarkably united in his character. In the woods, a genial companion, a single-hearted, kind, and generous friend, as well as a childlike enthusiast and manly sportsman; he stood before the council of an institution with his first delineation—the bald-headed eagle, or opened his portfolio to the inspection of an English nobleman in his lordly castle, with quiet self-possession, an independent air, and without exhibiting the least solicitude either for patronage or approbation. Arriving at a frontier village, after a tramp of months in the wilderness, his long beard, tattered leather dress, and keen eye, made him an object of idle wonder or impertinent gossip; but none imagined that this grotesque hunter-artist enjoyed the honours of all the learned societies of Europe. His exultation at the discovery of a new species, and his satisfaction at the correct finish and elegant verisimilitude of a specimen, amply recompensed him for days of exposure or ill-success. On his journey from the South, he kept pace with the migration of the birds; and he proclaimed the Washington sea-eagle to his country and the scientific world with the pride and delight of a conqueror.

His passion for rambling caused Audubon to fail in several business enterprises he undertook; and at one period he applied to Sully for instruction in portrait painting, but soon abandoned the idea. So faulty did Dawson, the engraver originally employed by the Prince of Musignano to illustrate ornithology, consider

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the early specimens of Audubon's skill as a draftsman, that he refused to execute them, and appeared to consider the pigments invented by the woodland artist as the most remarkable feature they presented. Although thus discouraged on every hand, we can readily believe his declaration, that he left America with profound regret, although his career abroad affords yet another striking evidence of that memorable and holy saying, "that a prophet is not without honour save in his own country." It is natural that a man who succeeded by virtue of toil and fortitude should repudiate the commonly received faith in mere genius; and we are not surprised that his settled view of the philosophy of life was patient self-reliance, and meditation on facts derived from personal observation, with unremitted habits of labour. To these resources he owed his own renown and achievements; and his high-arched brow, dark-gray eye, and vivacious temperament marked him as fitted by nature to excel in action as well as thought — a destiny which his pursuits singularly realized. There was something bird-like in the very physiognomy of Audubon, in the shape and keenness of his eye, the aquiline form of the nose, and a certain piercing and vivid expression when animated. He was thoroughly himself only amid the freedom and exuberance of nature; the breath of the woods exhilarated and inspired him; he was more at ease under a canopy of boughs than beneath gilded cornices, and felt a necessity to be within sight either of the horizon

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or the sea. Indeed, so prevailing was this appetite for Nature, if we may so call it, that from the moment the idea of his last-projected expedition was abandoned —in accordance with the urgent remonstrances of his family, mindful of his advanced age—he began to droop, and the force and concentration of his intellect visibly declined. Both his success and his misfortunes, therefore, proved the wisdom of Richter's advice, to steadfastly and confidently follow the permanent instincts of character, however they may seem opposed to immediate interest.

The style of Audubon reflects his character with unusual emphasis and truth. He was one of that class of men who united intellectual and physical activity in their natures so equally, that while their very temperament forbids them to be exclusively students, their intelligence demands a constant accession of new ideas. Professor Wilson and Baron Humboldt belong to the same species. No one can glance over Audubon's Biography of Birds, without being struck with the unusual animation and reality of the style. He writes with an ease and enthusiasm that makes portions of his work quite as entertaining and far more suggestive than a felicitous novel. Instead of a formal nomenclature or pedantic description, he digresses continually from the technical details which are requisite to the scientific value of his treatise, to charming episodes of personal adventure, sketches of local scenery and habits, and curious anec-

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dotes illustrative of natural history or human character. The titles of these incidental chapters adequately suggest their aim and interest, such as "Hospitality in the Woods," "Force of the Waters," "The Squatters of Labrador," "Wreckers of Florida," "A Maple Sugar Camp," "A Ball in Newfoundland," "Breaking up of the Sea," "Pitting of Wolves," "Long Calm at Sea," "A Kentucky Barbecue," &c. We are thus genially admitted to the knowledge of much that is characteristic and interesting, by spirited and graceful narratives. His artist's eye, and his sportsman's zest, give liveliness and a picturesque grace to the best of these interludes; they relieve the monotony of mere description, and also impart an individuality to the entire work, by associating the positive information it conveys with the fortunes and feelings of the author. His habit of naming newly-discovered birds after his friends is another pleasing feature. Thus genially is our view of nature enlarged, the attractiveness of romance given to a department of natural history, and one part of the world made perfectly acquainted with the feathered tribes of another. I need not enlarge upon the amenities resulting from pursuits of this kind, and their encouragement by individuals of taste and wealth,—of the innocent and available gratification thus extensively yielded, or of the more liberal and pleasing views resulting therefrom. In a literary point of view, the style of Audubon, notwithstanding an almost unavoidable vein of egotism,

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—in its clearness, colloquial facility, and infectious enthusiasm, proves how much more effectively intimacy with nature develops even the power of expression than conformity to rules; and vindicates completeness of life, animal and mental, as essential to true manhood even in literature.

This, in our view, is one of the most important lessons derived from such a career as that of Audubon philosophically considered. There is a cant of spiritualism, at the present day, which repudiates the vital relation of genius to material laws. In the view of this shallow philosophy to trace intellectual results in any degree to physical causes, is derogating from the essential beauty of mind. The class of persons who affect this extreme devotion to etherial systems, aim to sever body and soul while mutually alive, contemn physiology in their analysis of character, and recognise only the abstract in mental phenomena. This mode of reasoning is founded not less in irreverence than error. The most truly beautiful and significant phases of intellect, fancy, moral sentiment, and all that is deemed spiritual in man, is born of its combination with the human. Indeed, the grand characteristic of life, considered in a metaphysical light, is that it is a condition which brings together and gives scope for the action and reaction of material influences on spiritual genius. The end is development, growth, and modification. As the rarest fruit owes its flavour and hues to qualities imbibed from

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earth and air, from rain and sunshine; so what is called the soul is the product of the thinking and sensitive principle in our nature, warmed, enriched and quickened by the agency of an animal organism—the channel of nature,—by sensation, physical development, appetites, and sensations, as well as ideas.

An author differs from other men only by the gift and habit of expression. This faculty (which for the ordinary purpose of convenience and pleasure, speech is only requisite), through genial cultivation redoubles its force, meaning, and beauty, and is capable of affording a kind of permanent utterance to what is most dear and important to man. It is obvious, therefore, that the more thoroughly an author's nature embraces the traits peculiar to manhood, the more efficient and satisfactory will his vocation be fulfilled. Hence the universal recognition of Shakspeare's supremacy in authorship: it is because his range of expression included more of what is within and around life—more, in a word, of humanity, than any other single expositor. In general, authorship is partial, temporary, and its force lies in a special form. Writers devoted to abstract truth, like Kant and Jonathan Edwards, are not to be included in the proposition, as their appeal is not to the sympathies, but to the pure intelligence of the race. But the authors who really affect the mass, and represent vividly the spirit of their age, are not less eminent for genuine human qualities — for prevailing traits of temperament,

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appetite, and sensibility, than for superior reflective and imaginative gifts. It is, indeed, essential that they should possess the former in a high degree in order effectively to exhibit the latter. This is constantly illustrated in literature and art. With a fancy which scarcely approached the idealism of Shelley, Burns thrilled the heart of his kind by virtue of an organization that humanized his genius. Landor is equipped with the lore of antiquity, and all the graces of classical diction to advocate his liberal opinions, yet while his elegant volumes adorn the libraries of scholars and men of taste, Dickens, by virtue of what may be called a more genial instinct, pleads for the oppressed in a million hearts. Jenny Lind sings many cavatinas with more precision and artistic power than Grisi; but her voice, uncharged with the sensuous life whose vibration is inevitably sympathetic, does not so seize upon the nerves or quicken the blood. The element of sensation as related to sound, form, and ideas, is essential to popular literature. It is the peculiar characteristic of this department of art that it depends upon sympathy, which can only be awakened in large circles by addressing the whole nature, by winning the senses as well as the mind, stirring the heart not less than eliciting the judgment, and, in a word, making itself felt in that universal human consciousness which, to distinguish it alike from mere intellect or mere feeling, we call the soul.

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The author who expects reception there, must write not only with his intelligence, his imagination, and his will, but with his temperament and his sensitive organism : he must, in a degree, fuse perception and sensation, nervous energy and moral feeling, physical emotion and aërial fancy ; and then, at some point, he will be sure to touch the sympathy of others—not the scholar only, but the peasant. Accordingly I always find in the habits and idiosyncracies of popular authors a clue to their success. There is an analogy between their constitution and their writing. The tone of the latter is born of the man, and forms his personal distinction as an author. Reasoning, rhetoric, and descriptive limning, considered as processes, do not differ according to the writer, they only vary in a certain spirit, manner, or, more properly, tone ; and when we analyze this, we shall find it given out by the individual character—by the particular union of moral and physical qualities that make up the identity of the author, and not originating in a pure abstract and spiritual emanation. Far from diminishing, this but enhances the interest of authorship ; it renders it a great social fact, and a legitimate branch of human economy. It teaches us to regard authors as we regard men, by the light of character ; and from their human to deduce their literary peculiarities instead of the reverse, which is the method of superficial criticism.

The popular basis of Audubon's renown, as well as the individuality of his taste as a naturalist, rests upon

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artistic merit. I have alluded to the instinctive desire he so early manifested not only to observe, but to possess the beautiful denizens of the forest and the meadow; and he candidly acknowledges that he was induced to take their portraits to console himself for not possessing the originals. Rude as were his first attempts to delineate birds, few portrait-painters work in a more disinterested spirit: the motive was neither gain, nor hope of distinction, nor even scientific enthusiasm; for when Wilson called at his place of business, these primitive sketches were produced as the results of leisure, and the work of an unskilled amateur. It is evident, therefore, that a genuine love of the occupation, and a desire to have authentic memorials of these objects of his enthusiastic admiration, was the original cause of his labours with crayon and pigments; circumstances, an ardent temperament, and an earnest will gradually developed this spontaneous tendency into a masterly artistic faculty; he sketched, painted, and destroyed—copied, retouched, and improved, until he succeeded in representing perfectly the forms, colours, attitudes, and expression of the feathered tribe. The life-size of these delineations, their wonderful accuracy, the beauty of their hues, and the animation of their aspect, instantly secured for the backwoodsman-artist universal praise; but a minute inspection revealed yet higher claims: each plate, in fact, is an epitome of the natural history of the species depicted,—male and female, young and adult,

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are grouped together, their plumage at different seasons, the vegetation they prefer, the soil, the food, sometimes the habits, and often the prey of each bird are thus indicated; and we take in at a glance not only the figure, but the peculiarities of the genus. This completeness of illustration, the result of vast study, united as it is with grace and brilliancy of execution, led the great naturalist of France to declare that America had achieved a work unequalled in Europe. No lover of nature, whether poet or *savant*, can contemplate these exquisite and vivid pictures in a foreign country, without delight and gratitude; for, without any exertion on his part, they introduced him to an intimate acquaintance with the varied and numerous birds which haunt the woods, sky, and waters between Labrador and Florida, in hue, outline, and action as vivid and true as those of nature; and their intrinsic value as memorials is enhanced by the consideration that a rapid disappearance of whole species of birds has been observed to attend the progress of civilization on this continent.

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THE HUMORIST:

WASHINGTON IRVING.

THE similarity of the landscape in different portions of the country is often mentioned as a defect in American scenery; but it has the advantage of constantly affording an epitome of nature and an identity of suggestion favourable to national associations. Without the wild beauty of the Ohio or the luxuriant vegetation of the Mississippi, the Hudson thus preserves a certain verisimilitude in the form of its banks, the windings of it channel, and the hills and trees along its shores, essentially American. The reflective observer can easily find in them characteristic features, and in the details of the panorama which meets his eye, even during a rapid transit, tokens of all that is peculiar and endeared in the condition and history of his native land; and it is, therefore, not less gratifying to his sense of the appropriate than his feeling for the beautiful, that the home of our favourite author should consecrate the scene. To realize how the

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Hudson thus identifies itself with national associations, while scanning the details we must bear in mind the general relations of the noble river—the great metropolis towards which it speeds, with her forest of masts, interminable lines of building, lofty spires, crowded thoroughfares, and smoky canopy; the isle-gemmed bay and adjacent ocean; and then reverting to the chain of inland seas with which it is linked, and the junction of its greatest elevation with the vast range of the Alleghanies which intersect the boundless West, recall the intricate network of iron whereby the most distant village which nestles at their feet is connected with its picturesque shores. Thus regarded as a vital part of a sublime whole, an elemental feature, both geographical and political, of a magnificent continent, the Hudson fills the imagination with grandeur, while it fascinates the eye with loveliness.

A few miles from the shores, and in many instances on the highest ranges of hills, gleam isolated lakes, fringed with woods and dotted with small islands, whence azalia blossoms and feathery shrubs overhang the water, which is pellucid as crystal, in summer decked with lilies, in winter affording inexhaustible quarries of ice, and, at all seasons, the most romantic haunts for the lover of nature. Nor is this comprehensive aspect confined to the river's natural adjuncts. The immediate localities are equally significant. On the Jersey shore, which meets the gaze at the very commencement of the upward voyage, are visible the grove

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where Hamilton fell, the most affecting incident in our political annals; and the heights of Weehawken, celebrated by the spirited muse of Halleck; soon, on the opposite shore, we descry the evergreen foliage of Trinity Church Cemetery, beneath which lie the remains of that brave explorer of the forest and lover of the winged tribes of the land—Audubon; now rise the Palisades—nearest landmarks of the bold stand first taken by the colonists against British oppression, where Fort Washington was captured by the Hessians in 1776; and whence the enemy's vessels of war were so adroitly frightened away by Talbot's fire-ship, and the most persecuted martyrs of the Revolution were borne to the infamous prison-ship at Long Island.

This wonderful range of columnar rock, varying in height from fifty to five hundred feet, and extending along the river to the distance of twenty miles, rises perpendicular from the water, and the channel often runs immediately at its base. The gray, indented sides of this natural rampart, its summit tufted with thickets, and a few fishers' huts nestled at its foot, resembles the ancient walls of an impregnable fortress; here and there the traces of a wood-slide mark its weather-stained face; and in the stillness of a winter day, when the frozen water collected in its apertures expands in the sunshine, from the other side of the river may be distinctly heard the clang of the falling trap-rock dissevered from the mass. Opposite are seen the variegated hills and dales of

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Winchester county. There let us pause, in the neighbourhood of our author's residence, to view the familiar scene amid which he lives. Gaze from beneath any of the numerous porticos which hospitably offer shelter on the hill-sides and at the river's marge, breathe the pure air, contemplate the fresh tints of a June morning. It is one of those localities which Nature herself indicates as a byway haunt of the traveller, and a site for a home to the resident.

In this vicinity the river expands to the width of two or three miles, forming what is called Tappan Bay—which, seen from the surrounding eminences, appears like an immense lake; picturesque undulations limit the view, meadows covered with luxuriant grain which waves gracefully in the breeze, emerald with turf, dark with copses, or alive with tasselled maize, alternate with clumps of forest-trees or cheerful orchards; over this scene of rural prosperity flit gorgeous clouds through a firmament of pale azure, and around it wind roads which seem to lure the spectator into the beautiful glens of the neighbouring valleys. Nearer to his eye are patches of woodland overhanging ravines, where rock, foliage, and stream combine to form a romantic and sequestered retreat, invaded by no sound but that of rustling leaf, chirping bird, humming insect, or snapping chestnut burr; parallel with these delicious nooks which usually overhang the river, are fields in the highest state of cultivation, surrounding elegant mansions, with the usual gravel-walks, flower-beds,

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ornamental trees and neat lawns; but farther inland stretch pastures where the mullein waves undisturbed, stone-walls and vagrant fences divide fallow acres, the sweet-briar clambering over their rugged surface, clumps of elder-bushes, or a few willows clustered about a pond, and the red cones of the sumac, dead leaves, brown mushrooms and downy thistles, mark one of those neglected yet wildly rural spots which Crabbe loved to describe. Even here, at the sunset hour, we have but to turn towards the river, at some elevated point, and a scene of indescribable beauty is exhibited. The placid water is tinted with amber, hues of transcendent brightness and combination glow along the western horizon, fleecy masses of vapour are illumined with exquisite shades of colour; deep scintillations of rose or purple kindle the edges of the clouds; the zenith wears a crystalline tone; the vesper star twinkles with a bright though softened ray; and the peace of heaven seems to descend upon the transparent wave and the balmy air. And if we observe the immediate scene around one of the humble red-roofed homesteads or superior dwellings which are scattered over the hill-sides and valleys of this region, and call back the vision from its widest to the most narrow range, the eye is not less gratified nor the heart less moved by images of rustic comfort and beauty. Perhaps a large tulip-tree, with its broad expanse of verdure and waving chalices, or a superb chestnut, plumed with feathery blossoms, lends

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its grateful shade, while we follow the darting swallow, watch the contented kine, or curiously note the humming-bird poised, like a fragment of the rainbow, over a woodbine wreathed about the porch, and mark the drony bee clinging to the mealy stamen of the holy-hock, or murmuring on the pink globe of the clover. The odour of the hayfield, the glancing of countless white sails far below, the flitting of shadows and the refreshing breeze—all unite to form a picture of tranquil delight.

Resuming our course, after such an interlude, we pass the scene of the gallant and unfortunate André's capture and execution, a bridge of the Croton aqueduct, one of the triumphs of our civilization, the smoke of iron-works—the token of the liberal enterprise of the country, or a splendid steam-vessel—the evidence of her mechanical genius. Stoney Point, where another fierce struggle for our liberties occurred, the site of the fortification being marked by a lighthouse, the towering Dunderberg mountain, and that lofty promontory called Anthony's Nose, where a sudden turn of the river in a western direction all at once ushers us into the glorious highlands, at the very point where, in 1777, the chain was stretched from one side to the other, as a barrier to the invader, and which the insufficient garrison were forced to surrender to Sir Henry Clinton. The house once occupied by the traitor Arnold is soon forgotten in the thought of Kosciusko, whose monument rises on the precipitous bank at West Point—the only institu-

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tion in the land which insures a race of gentlemen; and here the wild umbrage that covers Cro'nest recalls Drake's fanciful poem; and old Fort Putnam, crowning the highest of the majestic hills, seems waiting for the moonbeams to clothe its altitudinous ruins with enchantment; Buttermilk Fall glimmers on one side, while the proud summit of the Grand Sachem towers on the other. Then opens the Bay of Newburgh, a town memorable as the spot where the mutinous letters of the Revolution were dated, and where the head-quarters and parting scene of Washington and his officers are consecrated to endeared remembrance. Beyond appear the most beautiful domains in the land, where broad ranges of meadow and groups of noble trees, in the highest state of order and fertility, transport us in fancy to the rural life of England. The last great feature of this matchless panorama is the Kaatskill Mountains rising in their misty shrouds, or, in a clear atmosphere, stretching away in magnificent proportions, whence the eye may wander for sixty miles over a country mapped by prolific acres, with every shade of verdure—sublimated, as it were, by interminable ranges of mountain, and animated by the silvery windings of the Hudson, whose gleaming tide lends brilliancy to the more dense hues of tree, field, and umbrageous headland.

The navigable extent of the river, and the fresh tints of its water, banks, and sky, are in remarkable contrast with those celebrated transatlantic streams

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endeared to our imaginations. To an American the first view of the Tiber and the Seine, their turbid waters and flat shores, occasions peculiar disappointment; and it is the associations of the Rhine and Lake Como, and those features they derived from art, which chiefly give them superiority. The mellow light of the past and the charm of an historical name, invest the ruined castles and famed localities of their shores with an enduring interest; and although a classic river, when swollen by the freshets of spring, according to Tasso,—

"Pare che porta guerra e non tributo al mare,"

the grand scale and sylvan beauty of his native waters eloquently assert in the American's memory unrivalled natural attractions. In the spirit, therefore, of justifiable enthusiasm not less than local attachment, does Irving, through honest Diedrich, thank God he was born on the banks of the Hudson; for it possesses all the elements requisite to inspire the fancy and attach the heart. The blue waving line of its distant hills in the twilight of the early dawn; the splendid hues of its surrounding foliage in autumn; the glassy expanse of its broad surface, and the ermine drapery of its majestic promontories in winter; the scene of verdant luxury it presents in summer; its sheltered nooks, pebbly coves, and rocky bluffs; the echoes of the lofty highlands and the balmy hush of evening, when the saffron-tinted water reflects each passing

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sail, and the cry of the whip-poor-will or monotone of the katy-did, are the only sounds of life—all utter a mysterious appeal to the senses and imagination.

Washington Irving, although so obviously adapted by natural endowments for the career in which he has acquired such eminence, was educated, like many other men of letters, for the legal profession; he, however, early abandoned the idea of practice at the bar for the more lucrative vocation of a merchant. His brothers were established in business in the city of New York, and invited him to take an interest in their house, with the understanding that his literary tastes should be gratified by abundant leisure. The unfortunate crisis in mercantile affairs, which followed the peace of 1815, involved his family, and threw him upon his own resources for subsistence. To this apparent disaster is owing his subsequent devotion to literature. The strong bias of his own idiosyncrasies, however, had already indicated this destiny; his inaptitude for affairs, his sensibility to the beautiful, his native humour and the love he early exhibited for wandering, observing, and indulging in day-dreams, would infallibly have led him to record his fancies and feelings. Indeed, he had already done so with effect in a series of letters which appeared in a newspaper of which his brother was editor. His tendency to a free, meditative, and adventurous life, was confirmed by a visit to Europe in his early youth. Born in the city of New York on the 3rd of April, 1783, he pursued his

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studies, his rambles, and his occasional pencraft there until 1804, when ill-health made it expedient for him to go abroad. He sailed for Bordeaux, and thence roamed over the most beautiful portions of Southern Europe, visited Switzerland and Holland, sojourned in Paris, and returned home in 1806. During his absence he seriously contemplated the profession of an artist, but subsequently resumed his law studies, and was admitted to the bar. Soon after, however, the first number of "Salmagundi" appeared, an era in our literary annals; and in December, 1808, was published "Knickerbocker's History of New York." He afterwards edited the "Analectic Magazine."

In the autumn of 1814 he joined the military staff of the Governor of New York, as aid-de-camp and secretary, with the title of colonel. At the close of the war he embarked for Liverpool, with a view of making a second tour in Europe; but the financial troubles intervening, and the remarkable success which had attended his literary enterprises being an encouragement to pursue a vocation which necessity not less than taste now urged him to follow, he embarked in the career of authorship. The papers afterwards collected under the title of "The Sketch-Book," at once gained him the sympathy and admiration of his contemporaries. They originally appeared in New York, but attracted immediate attention in England, and were republished there in 1820. After residing there five years, Mr. Irving again visited

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Paris, and returned to bring out "Bracebridge Hall," in London, in May, 1822. The next winter he passed in Dresden, and in the following spring put "Tales of a Traveller" to press. He soon after went to Madrid, and wrote the "Life of Columbus," which appeared in 1828. In the spring of that year he visited the south of Spain, and the result was the "Chronicles of the Conquest of Granada," which was published in 1829. The same year he revisited that region and collected the materials for his "Alhambra."

He was soon after appointed Secretary of Legation to the American Embassy in London, which office he held until the return of Mr. M'Lane, in 1831. While in England, he received one of the fifty-guinea gold medals provided by George IV., for eminence in historical composition, and the degree of LL.D. from the University of Oxford. His return to New York in 1832 was greeted by a festival, at which were gathered his surviving friends and all the illustrious men of his native metropolis. The following summer he accompanied one of the Commissioners for removing the Indian tribes west of the Mississippi. The fruit of this excursion was his graphic "Tour on the Prairies." Soon after appeared "Abbotsford and Newstead Abbey" and "Legends of the Conquests of Spain." In 1836 he published "Astoria" and the "Adventures of Captain Bonneville." In 1839 he contributed several papers to the "Knickerbocker Magazine."

Early in 1842 he was appointed Minister to Spain.

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On his return to this country in 1848, he began the publication of a revised edition of his works, to the list of which he has since added a "Life of Goldsmith" and "Mahomet and his Successors;" and he is now engaged upon a "Life of Washington."

This outline should be filled by the reader's imagination, with the accessories and the colouring incident to so varied, honourable, and congenial a life. In all his wanderings, his eye was busied with the scenes of nature, and cognizant of their every feature, his memory brooded over the traditions of the past, and his heart caught and reflected every phase of humanity. With the feelings of a poet and the habitudes of an artist, he thus wandered over the rural districts of merry England, the melancholy hills of romantic Spain, and the exuberant wilderness of his native land, gathering up their most picturesque aspects and their most affecting legends, and transferring them, with the pure and vivid colours of his genial expression, into permanent memorials. Every quaint outline, every mellowed tint, the aërial perspective that leads the sight into the mazes of antiquity, the amusing still-life or characteristic human attributes,—all which excites wonder, sympathy, and merriment, he thus recognised and preserved, and shed over all the sunny atmosphere of a kindly heart and the freshness of a natural zest, and the attraction of a modest character,—a combination the result of which has been thus aptly described:—

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"What! Irving? thrice welcome warm heart and fine brain,
You bring back the happiest spirit from Spain,
And the gravest sweet humour, that ever were there
Since Cervantes met death in his gentle despair;
Nay, don't be embarrassed, nor look so beseeching,
I shan't run directly against my own preaching,
And having just laughed at their Raphaels and Dantes,
Go to setting you up beside matchless Cervantes;
But allow me to speak what I honestly feel,
To a true poet-heart add the fun of Dick Steele,
Throw in all of Addison, minus the chill,
With the whole of that partnership's stock and goodwill,
Mix well, and while stirring, hum o'er, as a spell,
The 'fine old English Gentleman,' simmer it well.
Sweeten just to your own private liking, then strain,
That only the finest and clearest remain.
Let it stand out of doors till a soul it receives
From the warm lazy sun loitering down through green leaves,
And you'll find a choice nature not wholly deserving
A name either English or Yankee—just Irving."

The eminent success which has attended the late republication of Irving's works, teaches a lesson of practical wisdom which we hope will not be lost on the cultivators of literature. It proves a truth which all men of enlightened taste intuitively feel, but which is constantly forgotten by perverse aspirants for literary fame: and that is—the permanent value of a direct, simple, and natural style. The attempt to wrest our vernacular into a foreign idiom, to startle the reader with unusual phrases, and to coin words for effect, are experiments which must inevitably fail of their desired object. It is undoubtedly true that individuality of style is characteristic of genius in all the arts, that of writing included; but it is not less true, that

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fidelity to pure diction, the absolute laws of expression, and to nature and simplicity, lies at the basis of all enduring triumphs. It is not only the genial philosophy, the humane spirit, the humour and pathos of Irving, which endear his writings and secure for them an habitual interest, but it is the refreshment afforded by a recurrence to the unalloyed, unaffected, clear, and flowing style in which he invariably expresses himself. We revert gladly to this as we do to the breathing of spring or the golden haze of autumn, by a principle of instinctive affinity. The theatrical and spasmodic method may for a time attract, just as a pyrotechnic display may engage our attention on a holiday evening; and its casual splendour has the same relation to sunshine as artificial has to natural style in literature.

The place which our author holds in national affection can never be superseded. His name is indissolubly associated with the dawn of our recognised literary culture. We have always regarded his popularity in England as one of the most charming traits of his reputation, and that, too, for the very reasons which narrow critics once assigned as derogatory to his national spirit. His treatment of English subjects; the felicitous manner in which he revealed the life of our ancestral land to us her prosperous offspring, mingled as it was with vivid pictures of our own scenery, touched a chord in the heart which responds to all that is generous in sympathy and noble in association. If we regard Irving with na-

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tional pride and affection, it is partly on account of his cosmopolitan tone of mind—a quality, among others, in which he greatly resembles Goldsmith. It is, indeed, worthy of a true American writer, that, with his own country and a particular region thereof as a nucleus of his sentiment, he can see and feel the characteristic and the beautiful, not only in Old England but in romantic Spain; that the phlegmatic Dutchman and the mercurial southern European find an equal place in his comprehensive glance. To range from the local wit of Salmagundi to the grand and serious historical enterprise which achieved a classic "Life of Columbus," and from the simple grief embalmed in the "Widow's Son," to the observant humour of the "Stout Gentleman," bespeaks not only an artist of exquisite and versatile skill, but a man of the most liberal heart and catholic taste.

Reputations, in their degree and kind, are as legitimate subjects of taste as less abstract things—and in that of Washington Irving there is a completeness and unity seldom realized. It accords, in its unchallenged purity, with the harmonious character of the author and the serene attractions of his home. By temperament and cast of mind he was ordained to be a gentle minister at the altar of literature, an interpreter of the latent music of nature and the redeeming affections of humanity; and, with a consistency not less dictated by good sense than true feeling, he has instinctively adhered to the sphere he was specially

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gifted to adorn. Since his advent as a writer, an intense style has come into vogue: glowing rhetoric, bold verbal tactics, and a more powerful exercise of thought, characterize many of the popular authors of the day; but in literature as in life, there are various provinces both of utility and taste; and in this country and age, a conservative tone, a reliance on the kindly emotions and the refined perceptions, are qualities eminently desirable. Therefore, as we look forth upon the calm and picturesque landscape which environs him, we are content that no fierce polemic, visionary philanthropist, or morbid sentimentalist has thus linked his name with the tranquil beauties of the scene; but that it is the home of an author who, with graceful diction and an affectionate heart, celebrates the scenic charms of the outward world, and the harmless eccentricities and natural sentiment of his race.

The true bias of Irving's genius is artistic. The lights and shadows of English life, the legendary romance of Spain, the novelties of a tour on the Prairies of the west, and of adventures in the Rocky Mountains, the poetic beauty of the Alhambra, the memories of Abbotsford and Newstead Abbey, the quaint and comfortable philosophy of the Dutch colonists, and the scenery of the Hudson, are themes upon which he expatiates with the grace and zest of a master. His affinity of style with the classic British essayists served not only as an invaluable precedent in view of the crude mode of expression prevalent half a century ago among

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us, but also proved a bond in letters between America and England, by recalling the identity of language and domestic life at a time when great asperity of feeling divided the two countries.

The circumstances of our daily life, and the impulse of our national destiny, amply insure the circulation of progressive and practical ideas; but there is little in either to sustain a wholesome attachment to the past, or inspire disinterested feeling and imaginative recreation. Accordingly, we rejoice that our literary pioneer is not only an artist of the beautiful, but one whose pencil is dipped in the mellow tints of legendary lore, who infuses the element of reform and the sportiveness of fancy into his creations, and thus yields genuine refreshment and a needed lesson to the fevered minds of his countrymen. No contrast, indeed, can be more entire than that between the Dutch passivity he loves to delineate, the indolent humour which gives such zest to his sketches, and the Yankee's enterprise which overlays the scene of his inventions. It is a juxtaposition of the dreamy and the wide-awake quite startling to the imagination; and all the more delectable from this relishing contrast is it to turn from the elaborate and showy arrangements of the monied citizen of to-day to one of our author's honest burghers, with his old-fashioned domicile "built of small yellow bricks brought from Holland, having latticed windows and gable fronts, surmounted with weathercocks," and there learn how "love is translated into Low

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Dutch." Of all his immortal Flemish pictures, however, the most precious to his countrymen is that which contains the house of old Baltus Van Tassell, especially since it has been refitted and ornamented by Geoffrey Crayon; and pleasant as it is to their imagination as Wolfert's Roost, it is far more dear to their hearts as Sunnyside.

Local fame is a beautiful prerogative of genius; it sets apart and renders memorable regions which otherwise, however adorned by nature, would be devoid of human inspiration; it consecrates to meditation, and enshrines in the heart, the stream, mountain, or plain, to which the intelligent lover of his race, age after age, directs his pilgrimage: it seems to wed humanity to the universe, and elevate material objects into witnesses of the soul's immortality; and when the attractive in creation thus blends with the thought of intellectual behests, the observer becomes conscious of elevated sympathies. This is true even when a spot is only endeared as the place of birth or sepulture of the gifted and the brave; but such ideas are infinitely confirmed, and the sentiment they awaken deepened, when the offspring of the mind itself lends a permanent interest to the scene, and arrays it with the graces of fancy, humour, or sentiment. Thus magical to the eye appear the lakes of Cumberland, where the bard of Rydal Mount held philosophic and tender communion with visible things, and through them obtained spiritual insight; thus, even in the

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comparatively pale light of science, the little town of Selborne greets the traveller's gaze, since its natural history has been made familiar by the suggestive record of one of its inhabitants; thus the old haunts of multitudinous London impress us, in the hour of reverie, mellowed into quaint and winsome hues by the cherished reminiscences of Charles Lamb; even the unadventurous life of the sequestered English village becomes redolent of sweet meaning when Miss Mitford is our guide; and the humble green of Lissoy is peopled by the household muse of Goldsmith, with characters which have been favourites from childhood, and are stamped on the heart with his own well-beloved name.

And thus is the noble Hudson associated with Irving. As we follow its verdant and rocky marge, whirled along the banks by the panting engine, or borne upon the waters by the rapid steamer or wayward skiff, we trace the path so long ago followed by the redoubtable Stuyvesant or the scapegrace Dolph Huyliger and his aboriginal comrades. The same umbrageous inlets, precipitous rocks, and sylvan landmarks, meet the eye; the slow-wheeling eagle may yet be seen, at rare intervals, to launch proudly into the air from a dead bough on the loftiest bluffs, and a sturgeon to leap up from the flowing tide; and although, on every side, wide and long vistas are opened in the once impenetrable woods, fleets of tall sails cover the once lonely stream, and

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countless villas and farmhouses are visible through the trees, yet, in essential natural features, we recognise the picture of Irving. The face of the precipice is as inaccessible as when the smoke of the wigwam curled from its dizzy height; and the inlet as shadowy as when the canoe of the savage lightly grated over its pebbles. The alternations from sloping marge to frowning crag are as impressive as when they glided by the hunters and fur-traders of old. The thunder rumbles among the hills as it did when the grey Dutchmen were playing at bowls; and the cabbage, pumpkin, and wheat-fields, which excited the epicurean imagination of Ichabod Crane, annually display their redundant crops. Rip Van Winkle's prospect of another nap is, however, sadly marred by the commotion and noise incident to a more populous country and the scream of the locomotive. But with the unchangeable aspect of the river itself, and the inland landscape, are permanently associated the humorous and descriptive felicity of Irving. There, in America, did the pen of genius first give "a local habitation and a name" to the emanations of fancy, and twine the brow of primeval nature with the enchanted halo of art.

And the legends which he has so gracefully woven around every striking point in the scene, readily assimilate with its character, whether they breathe grotesque humour, harmless superstition, or pensive sentiment. We smile habitually, and with the same

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zest, at the idea of the Trumpeter's rubicund proboscis, the valiant defence of Bearn Island, and the figure which the pedagogue cuts on the dorsal ridge of old Gunpowder; and, inhaling the magnetic atmosphere of Sleepy Hollow, we easily give credit to the apparition of the Headless Horseman, and have no desire to repudiate the frisking imps of the Duyvel's Dans Kamer. The buxom charms of Katrina Vantassel, and the substantial comforts of her paternal farmhouse, are as tempting to us as they once were to the unfortunate Ichabod and the successful Brom Bones.

The mansion of this prosperous and valiant family, so often celebrated in his writings, is the residence of Washington Irving. It is approached by a sequestered road, which enhances the effect of its natural beauty. A more tranquil and protected abode, nestled in the lap of nature, never captivated a poet's eye. Rising from the bank of the river, which a strip of woodland alone intercepts, it unites every rural charm to the most complete seclusion. From this interesting domain is visible the broad surface of the Toppan Zee; the grounds slope to the water's edge, and are bordered by wooded ravines; a clear brook ripples near, and several neat paths lead to shadowy walks or fine points of river scenery. The house itself is a graceful combination of the English cottage and the Dutch farmhouse. The crow-stepped gables, the tiles in the hall, and the weathercocks, partake of

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the latter character; while the white walls gleaming through the trees, the smooth and verdant turf, and the mantling vines of ivy and clambering roses, suggest the former. Indeed, in this delightful homestead are tokens of all that is most characteristic of its owner. The simplicity and rustic grace of the abode indicate an unperverted taste,—its secluded position a love of retirement; the cottage ornaments remind us of his unrivalled pictures of English country life; one weathercock used to veer about on the Stadthouse of Amsterdam, and, therefore, is a symbol of the fatherland; while the other adorned one of the grand dwellings in Albany before the Revolution, and is a significant memorial of the old Dutch colonists; and they are thus both associated with the fragrant memory of that famous and unique historian Diedrich Knickerbocker. The quaint and the beautiful are thus blended, and the effect of the whole is singularly harmonious. From the quietude of this retreat are obtainable the most extensive prospects; and while its sheltered position breathes the very air of domestic repose, the scenery it commands is eloquent of broad and generous sympathies.

Not less rare than beautiful is the lot of the author, to whom it is permitted to gather up the memorials of his fame and witness their permanent recognition:—the first partial favour of his contemporaries renewed by the mature appreciation of another generation; and equally gratifying is the coincidence of such a noble

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satisfaction with a return to the cherished and picturesque haunts of childhood and youth. It is a phase of life scarcely less delightful to contemplate than to enjoy; and we agree with a native artist who declared that in his many trips up and down the Hudson, he never passed Sunnyside without a thrill of pleasure. Nor, if thus interesting even as an object in the landscape, is it difficult to imagine what moral attractions it possesses to the kindred and friends who there habitually enjoy such genial companionship and frank hospitality. To this favoured spot, around which his fondest reminiscences hovered during a long absence, Mr. Irving returned, a few years since, crowned with the purest literary renown, and as much attached to his native scenery as when he wandered there in the holiday reveries of boyhood. And here, in the midst of a landscape his pen has made attractive in both hemispheres, and of friends whose love surpasses the highest meed of fame, he lives in daily view of scenes thrice endeared —by taste, association, and habit;—the old locust which blossoms on the green bank in spring, the brook which sparkles along the grass, the peaked turret, and vine-covered wall of that modest yet traditional dwelling, the favourite valley watered by the romantic Pocantoro, and, above all, the glorious river of his heart.

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THE POPULAR POET:

THOMAS CAMPBELL.

When Burns was on his deathbed, he said to a fellow-member of his military corps, "Don't let the awkward squad fire over me." There is an awkward squad in the ranks of all professions, and most earnestly is their service to be deprecated on any occasion calling for solemnity or tenderness. Then we demand what is graceful, harmonious, and efficient. Yet it is the constant fate of genius to be tried by other arbiters than its peers, to be profaned by idle curiosity and malignant gossip. The "awkward squad" in literature not only fire over the graves of poets, but are wont to discharge annoying batteries of squibs at them while living. The penny-a-liners scent a celebrity afar off and hunt it with the pertinacity of hounds; they flock in at the death like a brood of vultures; and often, without the ability either to sympathise with or to respect the real claims they pretend to honour, show up the foibles, mutilate the sayings, and fabricate the doings of those whose

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unostentatious private lives, to say nothing of the dignity of their public fame, should protect them from microscopic observation and vulgar comment.

No modern English poet has suffered more from this kind of notoriety than Campbell. Unlike his brother bards, he neither sought rural seclusion nor foreign exile, but continued to haunt cities to the last; and it is refreshing to turn from the hackneyed sketches of him in the magazines to his own letters and the history of his early career, and revive our best impressions of his character. To do this we must discard what is irrelevant and contemplate the essential. The only demand we have any moral right to make upon the bard who has enlisted our heart by his song, is that there exist in his actions and tone of feeling a spirit consistent with the sentiments deliberately advocated in his verse. There is no reason whatever to expect in him immunity from error; we are irrational to look for a beauty of feature, a majesty of life, and an evenness of temper corresponding with the ideal created by the finish and exaltation of his poetry; but if baseness deface the behaviour, and indifference chill the intercourse of him who has eloquently breathed into the ear of the world noble and glowing emotion, we are justified in feeling not only disappointment, but almost scepticism as to the reality of these divine sympathies. Such we do not believe possible in the nature of things. In spite of what is so often

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asserted of the discrepancy between authorship and character—literary biography demonstrates that "as a man thinketh so he is."

Milton and Dante, Goldsmith and Petrarch, were essentially what their works proclaim them, although the former occasionally exhibited asceticism, which is the extreme of that genius whose characteristic is will, and the latter sometimes displayed the weakness which, in our human frailty, attaches to the genius whose main principle is love. A touch of pedantry and hardihood slightly deform the images of those august spirits who explored the unseen world, as vanity and self-indulgence mar the serene beauty of the gentler minstrels who sung of the tender passion and the charms of domestic life; were it otherwise they would eclipse instead of representing humanity. There is a process of metropolitan decadence to which literary celebrities are liable, especially in London, for which we, whose privilege it is to look upon them over the grand perspective of the sea, should make just allowance. The most absurd whim of modern society is that of making what are called lions of authors, and especially of poets. No class of men appear to less advantage in a conventional position; and no two principles can be more radically adverse than that of mutual agreeableness, conformity, and display, of which society technically considered is the arena, and the spirit of earnestness, nature, and freedom, characteristic of poets, Idolised

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as they usually are, and with good reason, in the domestic circle and among intimate friends, the very qualities which are there elicited, general society keeps in abeyance; tact is the desideratum in the latter as truth is in the former; and though sometimes the natural dignity and manliness of genius successfully asserts itself in the face of pretence fortified by etiquette, as in the case of Burns at Edinburgh, the exception is too memorable not to have been rare. The consequence of this want of relation between the spirit of society and the poetic character, is that a formal homage is paid its representatives on their first appearance, which, at length, becomes wearisome to both parties; and if the time-honoured guest has not the wisdom to anticipate his social decay and withdraw into honourable retirement, those upon whose memories the prestige of his original reputation does not rest, are apt to fail in that recognition which habit has made almost necessary to his self-respect.

The admirers of dramatic and musical genius keenly regret the reappearance of the favourites of their youth in public, only to awaken the unfeeling curiosity of a new generation; and somewhat of the same melancholy attaches to the prolonged social exhibition of a man whose verse has rendered his name sacred to our associations and remembrance. That familiarity which breeds contempt denies the original glory of his presence. The name freely bandied at the feast comes to

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be repeated with less reverence at the fireside; the voice, whose lowest accent was once caught with breathless interest, is suffered to lose itself in the hum of commonplace table-talk; and the brow to which every eye used to turn with sympathetic wonder, seems no longer to wear the mysterious halo with which love and fancy crown the priests of nature. And usually the victim of this gradual disenchantment is quite unconscious of the change, until suddenly aroused to its reality. Aware of no blight upon his tree of promise, inspired by the same feelings which warmed his youth, wedded to the same tastes, and loyal to the same sentiments, with a kind of childlike trustfulness he reposes upon his own identity, and is slow to believe in the precarious tenure upon which merely social distinction is held.

To a reverent and generous spectator this is one of those scenes in the drama of life, which is the more affecting because so few look upon it with interest. We sigh at the fragility of personal renown, and pity the weakness which seems doomed to "make idols and to find them clay." Then how enviable appear those who "are gathered to the kings of thought far in the unapparent"—the young poet who died in the freshness of his life, and the aged bard who seasonably retreated to the sequestered haunts of nature, and breathed his last far from the busy world where the echo of his fame yet lingered! We are chiefly pained, in the opposite case, at the

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difficulty of associating the author with his works, the written sentiment with the ordinary talk, the poet with the man, when we thus are brought into habitual contact with the social effigy of genius. We are more mortified at the inconsistency of feeling which leads men to guard and cherish an architectural fragment, and yet interpose no wise and charitable hand to preserve from sacrilege "Creation's master-piece—the poet soul,"—which expends such hero-worship upon the distant and the dead, but holds up no shield between the greatness at its side, and the indifferent or perhaps malicious gaze of the world. Modern philanthropy has furnished asylums for almost all the physical and moral ills to which flesh is heir; but the award of celebrity apparently cancels the obligations of society towards the gifted; if improvident, as is usually the case, poverty and neglect are often their lot in age; and if prosperous in circumstances, but bereft of near and genial ties, they are homeless, and consequently reckless.

Instances of private sensibility to claims like these, not only felt but realized with beautiful zeal, are indeed recorded to the honour of our common nature: and such benefactors as Mrs. Unwin, the friend of Cowper, and the Gilmans, at whose house Coleridge died, will live in honour when more ostentatious almoners are forgotten. Let us congratulate ourselves that we are not among the witnesses of the social decadence of our favourite English authors. Freshly

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to us yet beams their morning fame; we know them only through their works, and death has but canonized what love had endeared. There is no dreary interlude between the glorious overture and the solemn finale. Their garlands to our vision press unwithered brows. The music of their names has never lost its spirit-stirring cadence; when uttered, memorable and eloquent passages recur, as "at the touch of an enchanter's wand." We think of Byron as he describes himself in his romantic pilgrimages, not as he appeared at Holland House and Drury. Shelley's memory is undimmed by the air of a Chancery court, and remains as lofty, pure, and ethereal as his funeral pyre; and Burns, thank heaven! we never saw performing excise duties. But of all the modern poets of Great Britain, the one whose memory we could have least suffered to be desecrated was Campbell; and we rejoice to have known him as the bard of Hope and not as Tom Campbell, especially as his correspondence exhibits his eminent title to poetical character as well as talent, and repudiates the shallow gossip which drew such superficial portraits of him in later years.

We find, in these letters, that Campbell the man was worthy of Campbell the poet; and that the ideal we had cherished of the author of Gertrude and Hohenlinden was essentially true to nature. The manner in which he has been dealt with, even by literary men, and especially by social detractors, is only another illustration of the humiliating truth

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that "Folly loves the martyrdom of Fame." Our view of the character of distinguished persons is threefold: that derived from the deeds or writings upon which their fame rests, the report of contemporaries, and their own memoirs and letters. Between the two latter there is usually some essential harmony, but the intermediate link in the chain of evidence seldom coincides with either. The decease of a renowned person is followed by the publication of his life, and recently it has been the wise and just custom to rely as far as possible on the testimony of the subject, rather than the opinions of the biographer.

The result is, that the misrepresentations and partial glimpses afforded by rumour and ambitious scribblers give way before the direct and authentic revelation of facts and personal correspondence, and we enjoy the high satisfaction of reconciling the man and the author; and the assurance that the sentiment and tone which originally endeared to us the one were truly embodied in the other. How different is the view now cherished of Burns, Byron, Keats and Lamb, from that prevalent before we were fully admitted to a knowledge of their trials, habits, temptations and ways of feeling and acting, by the record of sorrowing friends and the appearance of their familiar and confidential letters! In consideration of the inveterate tendency to exaggerate and distort the simple facts of a marked career, it would seem

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not only excusable but requisite for those who have won the peculiar sympathy or admiration of the world, to write an autobiography. Such a work, undertaken in the spirit and executed with the frank goodnature which belong to those of Cellini, Alfieri, Goldoni, and we may add, as a recent instance, Leigh Hunt, is a better portrait to bequeath than the formal and incomplete lives too often substituted by the zeal of friendship or the enterprise of authors.

Next to a good autobiography, however, the best service which can be rendered departed genius, is to bring together and unite by an intelligent and genuine narrative such personal memorials as most clearly represent the man as he was. However unambitious, the task is one of sacred responsibility, due not less to the enthusiasm which cherishes, than to the gifts which hallow, posthumous renown. We can then trace the elements of character as developed in boyhood, estimate the influence of education and circumstances, and recognize the domestic and social life of those whose personal reputation may have appeared incongruous with their permanent fame,—thus realizing the process of the principle of their eminence. It is not eulogy which we require; that, if deserved, is apparent in the deeds or words which have become a passport to glory; it is facts, sentiments, familiar illustrations whereby to judge for ourselves of the man whose name is indissolubly associated in our minds with the inspiration of heroism and poetry.

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The characters of a poet and a man of letters are so often blended in literary memoirs, as to appear identical, but their distinctness in nature is marked by inevitable traits. Seldom has the difference between the two been more clearly indicated than in the biography of Campbell; and the illustration is more emphatic from the fact that we are admitted to his experience and opinions through familiar correspondence.

The grand peculiarity of the poetic nature is faith in sentiment of some kind, obedience to its inspiration, delight in its utterance, and loyalty to its dictates. Neither time, nor interest, nor logic suffice to exhaust or modify this vital principle. Where it fails to triumph over these, it is evidently inadequate to justify the title of bard, minstrel, poet, or whatever name we apply to those upon whose minds its influence is pervading and instinctive. To infuse the life of his own spirit, the glow of his personal emotion, into thought and language, is the characteristic of the poet. His words differ from those of other men chiefly by virtue of a magnetic quality. They appeal to consciousness rather than memory, to the entire soul instead of the exclusive intellect. Hence they have power to stir the blood, linger on the ear, excite the imagination, and warm the heart. On the other hand, the man of letters can only grasp the technicalities of the art and wield the machinery of verse. As youth decays, as circumstances alter, as public

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taste varies, the enthusiam which, at first, gave a temporary fire to his rhythmical writing, is subdued to such a degree as to render his so-called muse a very flexible and hackneyed creature—the mere effigy of what she once promised to be. The genuine poet, on the contrary, strives in vain to reconcile himself to the mechanical drudgery of the pen, is coy of an art whose real excellence he has too keenly felt to be satisfied with any "counterfeit presentment;" and lives on wedded by an eternal affinity to the love of his youth, although he may have outgrown all relation to it but that of veneration and remembrance. The few gems of the latter outlive the mines opened by the former; scintillations of lyric fire radiated from an earnest heart, and generated by its native warmth, beam on like stars in the firmament; while the elaborate productions of tasteful and learned industry "fade into the light of common day." Only a felicitous passage—a theme accidentally enlivened by an impulse from individual life, redeems the ingenious and diffuse metrical composition from oblivion; but the spontaneous product of an inspired mind becomes a household and a national treasure.

Campbell's early life gave promise of this healthful endowment of the poetic faculty. He was a devoted student, and although constantly bearing off prizes, won and retained the love of his companions. They once owed a holiday to his rhymed petition, and such instances of the loving exercise of his talents were of

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frequent occurrence. His success at college was eminent in Greek; and the temperament of genius was evinced in the extreme alternation of his moods. Although often in high spirits, when his feelings became enlisted gravity ensued. He made the most obvious progress both in facility and power of expression, as we perceive by the gradual improvement in the style of his letters and occasional verses. But the most satisfactory indication of his poetical gifts we find in the ardour, constancy, and generous faith of his sentiments. In friendship, domestic intercourse, literary taste, and the observation of nature, there was evident, from the first, an enthusiasm and sensibility which gave the fairest promise as they brought him into vital relation with these sources of moral and sentient experience.

The early correspondence of few poets has a more truthful charm and graceful warmth. It reveals his heart and confirms the tenor of his poems. His visits to the Highlands—a residence of some months in Germany, and the study of the literature of the latter country, with the society of Edinburgh, all combined, at this most susceptible and enthusiastic period, to inform, excite, and chasten his mind. Thus enriched and disciplined—with the most limited pecuniary resources—and the greatest uncertainty as to what career he should adopt, the young poet was singularly exposed to the impressions of a period, when even the insensible and unenlightened were aroused to interest

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in public affairs, the welfare of society, and the progress of mankind. It was an epoch of war and of philanthropy, of revolution and experiment, of the most infernal tyranny and the noblest self-devotion. The overthrow of slavery was then first agitated; Poland and Greece heroically struggled, and the martyrdom of the former was achieved. The elements of civil society were deeply moved; the cause of truth and liberty inspired fresh championship, and the wrongs of humanity made themselves felt. At this time he meditated emigrating to America, where one of his brothers was already established.

It is a curious fact that several of the distinguished modern poets of England—among them Coleridge, Southey, and Keats—entertained similar views; and it is an equally curious speculation to imagine how such a course would have modified their writings and destiny. Campbell, also, with true poetical consistency, recoiled from the professions and commerce; and thus by the force of circumstances, as well as the promptings of genius, seemed destined for a literary life. This vague purpose was confirmed by the unprecedented success of his first poem. There is no instance, perhaps, in the annals of literature, of so instantaneous and complete a recognition of the advent of a poet as followed the appearance of the "Pleasures of Hope." It introduced him at once to fame and society; and it did this by virtue of the eloquent utterance it gave to feelings which then latently glowed in every noble

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heart. Like a bugle whose echoes speak the morning cheer which exhilarates the frame of the newly-roused hunter, it caught up, rendered musical and prolonged the strains of pity, hope, and faith, rife, though seldom audible, in the world.

It is essential to poetry of this nature that the sensibilities should be acted upon by some actual scene, person, or event; and accordingly we find that every successful composition of Campbell has a personal basis; to this, indeed, we may ascribe that spirit of reality which constitutes the distinction between forced and spontaneous verse; his muse, when herself, is awake, magnetic, and spirited; the sense of beauty, or the enthusiasm of love and freedom, being naturally excited, utter themselves in fervid strains. Thus the apostrophe to Poland, and the protest against scepticism, the appeal to the disappointed lover, the description of mutual happiness—and, in fact, all the animated episodes in the "Pleasures of Hope," grew directly out of the events of the day or the immediate experience of the poet. "Lochiel's Warning" embodies a traditionary vein of local feeling derived from the land of his nativity; the "Exile of Erin" consecrates the woes of a poor fellow with whom he sympathised on the banks of the Elbe; the "Beech Tree's Petition" was suggested by an interview with two ladies in the garden where it grew; the "Lines on a Scene in Bavaria" are a literal transcript from memory; "Ye Mariners of England" expresses feelings awak-

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ened by the poet's own escape from a privateer. It is a singular coincidence that the draft of this famous naval ode, which was found among his papers, was seized on his return from Germany on the suspicion that his visit had a treasonable design. In the freshness of youth he witnessed a battle, a retreat, and the field upon which the night-camp of an army was pitched; and the vivid emotions thus induced, he eloquently breathed in "Hohenlinden" and the "Soldier's Dream." His dramatic tastes are finely reflected in the address to John Kemble, and his classical in the ode to the Greeks. We also trace the relation between the very nature of the man and whatever appealed to the sense of the heroic or the beautiful in his letters. The State Trials excited his deepest youthful sympathy; it is natural that to him the memorable experience of life was to hear Neukomm play the organ and stand with Mrs. Siddons before the Apollo Belvidere. The "Turkish Lady" was written while his mind was full of a project to visit the East; and his subsequent intention of joining his brother in America, with whom he kept up a regular correspondence, accounts for his choice of "The Valley of Wyoming" as the scene of Gertrude.

A critic whose taste and organization fit him to seize upon the vital spirit of works of genius, says that in this poem there is "the best got-up bridal" in the whole range of English poetry. The zest and truthful beauty of the description is drawn from the bard's own

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experience of the conjugal sentiment. His biographer describes Miss Sinclair, who became his wife, as one of those women who unite great vivacity of temperament with a latent tenderness and melancholy—the very beings to captivate permanently a man at once ardent and tasteful, like Campbell.

Even his defects point to the same impressible temper; quickly aroused to anger, of which several curious instances occur in his memoirs, he as quickly yielded to the reaction of generous and candid feeling: the transition was as childlike as it was sincere, and in perfect accordance with the poetical character. The same is true of his alternate relish of severe intellectual labour and the most luxurious self-indulgence. Campbell by nature was a patriot and a philanthropist, a lover and a friend, an enthusiast and a scholar; impulsive and fastidious at the same time—generous and vain by turns, with sensibility and culture, now fagging and now soaring; and thus constituted, we may imagine the effect upon him of being doomed to write in the prime of his life—"my son is mad, my wife dead, and my harp unstrung." Yet, like nearly all the gifted men of his age, he was so singularly blessed with social privileges, that we are forcibly reminded of Scott's declaration that these constituted his real obligations to literature. In the course of Campbell's letters, we find him at different periods enjoying the society first of Dr. Burney, Mrs. Inchbald, Dr. Gregory,

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Dugald Stewart, and the leading spirits of the past century—then of Klopstock, Schlegel and Humboldt; and on his return from his first continental visit, of Currie, Roscoe, Sydney Smith, Mackintosh, Rogers, and the habitués of Holland House in its palmy days—while Madame de Stael, Mrs. Siddons, Scott, and the last bright galaxy of British writers were familiar associates.

In regard to the form of Campbell's poetry, we are immediately struck with his delicate and true feeling for the harmony of language: he knew instinctively how to follow Pope's rule, and cause the sound to be an echo to the sense. When a boy he expressed keen disappointment at not being able to make a lady appreciate the meaning of Homer by the sound of celebrated passages. We know of few specimens of English verse comparable to the best of Campbell's for effective rhythm. Contrast the spirit-stirring flow the song of the Greeks with the organ-like cadence of of "Hohenlinden," or the pathetic melody of "Lord Ullin's Daughter" with the deep flowing emphasis of the "Battle of the Baltic." It is remarkable that this fine musical adaptation belongs to all his genuine pieces;—we mean those naturally inspired; while his music is never whipped into service as in Glencoe and Theodric, without betraying the fact in her stiff or wayward movement. This only proves how real a poet Campbell was.

We demur, however, to the opinion frequently

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advanced, that his poetic fire died out long before his life. One of his noblest compositions, lofty and inspiring in sentiment, and grandly musical in rhythm, is "Hallowed Ground;" and one of his most striking pieces, "The Last Man," both of which were late productions.

The personality so characteristic of genuine feeling is not only evident in the obvious inspiration, but in the verbal execution of his conception. Thus he constantly impersonates insensible objects. It is the bugles that sing truce, and he that lays himself beneath the willow; the glow of evening is like, not the cheek and brow of woman, but of her we love. Throughout the intensity of the feeling personifies the object described, and gives human attributes to inanimate things—exactly as in the artless language of infancy and the oratory of an uncivilized people. Such is the instinct of nature; it is what separates verse from prose, the diction of fancy and emotion from that of affairs and science.

If any one is pre-eminently entitled to the name of Poet, in its most obvious sense, it is he who so emphatically represents in verse a natural sentiment that his expression of it is seized upon by the common voice and becomes its popular utterance. This direct, sympathetic, intelligent, and recognised phase of the art has been the most significant and effective, from the days of Job and Homer to those of Tasso and Campbell. The vivid rhetorical embodiment of a

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genuine feeling prevalent at the time, or characteristic of humanity, is the most obvious and the most natural province of the bard. The ballads of antiquity, the troubadour songs, and the primitive national lyric, evince how instinctive is this development of poetry. The philosophic combinations of the drama, the descriptive traits of the pastoral, and the formal range of the epic, are results of subsequent culture and more premeditated skill. This is also true of the refinements of sentiment, the mystical fancies and the vague expression which German literature, and the influence of Wordsworth, Shelley, and Coleridge, have grafted upon modern English verse.

If we were to adopt a vernacular poet from the brilliant constellation of the last and present century, as representing legitimately natural and popular feeling, with true lyric energy—such as finds inevitable response and needs no advocacy or criticism to uphold or elucidate it—we should name Campbell. He wrote from the intensity of his own sympathies with freedom, truth, and love; his expression, therefore, is truly poetic in its spirit; while in rhetorical finish and aptness he had the very best culture—that of German literature. Thus simply furnished with inspiration and with a style, both derived from the most genuine sources—the one from nature and the other from the highest art—he gave melodious and vigorous utterance, not to a peculiar vein of

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imagination like Shelley, nor a mystical attachment to nature like Wordsworth, nor an egotistic personality like Byron—but to a love of freedom and truth which political events had caused to glow with unwonted fervour in the bosoms of his noblest contemporaries; and to the native sentiment of domestic and social life—rendered more dear and sacred by their recent unhallowed desecration. It was not by ingenuity, egotism, or artifice that he thus chanted—but honestly, earnestly—from the impulse of youthful ardour and tenderness moulded by scholarship.

It is now the fashion to admire verse more intricate, sentiment less defined, ideas of a metaphysical cast, and a rhythm less modulated by simple and grand cadences; yet to a manly intellect, to a heart yet alive with fresh, brave, unperverted instincts—the intelligible, glowing, and noble tone of Campbell's verse is yet fraught with cheerful augury. It has outlived, in current literature, and in individual remembrance, the diffuse metrical tales of Scott and Southey; finds a more prolonged response, from its general adaptation, than the ever-recurring key-note of Byron; and lingers on the lips and in the hearts of those who only muse over the elaborate pages of those minstrels, whose golden ore is either beaten out to intangible thinness, or largely mixed with the alloy of less precious metal. Indeed, nothing evinces a greater want of just appreciation in regard to the art or gift of poetry than the frequent complaints of such

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a poet as Campbell because of the limited quantity of his verse. It would be as rational to expect the height of animal spirits, the exquisite sensation of convalescence, the rapture of an exalted mood, the perfect content of gratified love, the tension of profound thought, or any other state, the very law of which is rarity, to become permanent. Campbell's best verse was born of emotion,—not from idle reverie or verbal experiment; that emotion was heroic or tender, sympathetic or devotional;—the exception to the every-day, the common-place, and the mechanical; accordingly, in its very nature, it was "like angels' visits," and no more to be summoned at will than the glow of affection or the spirit of prayer.

That idleness had nothing to do with the want of productiveness of his muse, so absurdly insisted on, during his life, is evident from his letters. He was always busy—but unfortunately, for the most part, in tasks of literary drudgery undertaken for subsistence; and deserves laudation instead of censure, for having respected the divine art he loved too much to degrade it into the service of hackneyed necessity. He was in fact a singularly industrious man; in his youth, an assiduous student while performing the duties of tutor, clerk, and compiler; and in manhood and age always engaged upon some bookseller's undertaking, now making an abridgment and now a translation; at one time the editor of a magazine, and, at another, of a collection of the English poets; now writing notes for a

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classic, and now paragraphs for a journal, lectures for the Glasgow University, state papers for Lord Minto, the biography of Mrs. Siddons or Petrarch, letters from Algiers,—whatever, in short, offered in the way of literary work that would give him bread. His correspondence lets us into the secret of his unostentatious and patient labour, his constant projects and the suggestions of more; and the encroachments of ungenial employment upon his sensitive organization.

One cannot but honour the kindly and philosophic manner in which he speaks of his disappointments in these familiar letters; and rejoice to perceive that the feelings which inspired his memorable lines consoled him under all reverses, so that the moment he was in contact with the attractions of nature, friendship, and domestic peace, joy revived within him. The genuineness of his poetic impulse is thus indicated by the tenor of his life. Instead of lazily reposing on laurels early won, he was eminently true to the faith and independence which make beautiful the dreams of his youth;—devoted to his kindred and friends with self-denying generosity, sympathising to the last in the cause of freedom, cognizant everywhere and always of the intrinsic worth of the primal sentiments whose beauty he so fondly sung; and never forgetful of the duty and the privileges of amity, courage, and fame. Such is the evidence of the unstudied epistles collected by Dr. Beattie, the spontaneous record of

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his occupations, opinions, and feelings throughout life. They are consistent, and worthy both of the man and the poet. They exhibit a career divided between books and journeys—each nourishing his mind; an episode of domestic happiness which realizes all that good sense would advocate and romance glorify;—intervals of great physical suffering, melancholy bereavements, and cheerless toil, ever and anon redeemed by delightful social intercourse, deserved honours, and felicitous moods. The death of his wife, the idiocy of his only son, the failure of his own health, his homeless life in London, and his death in forlorn exile,—these, and some of the natural consequences of such vicissitudes, throw a gloom over portions of the memoir by Dr Beattie; but through and them beyond, now that they are passed, the poet rises benignly in the integrity of his sentiments and the beauty of his art.

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